# Tamil TIMES

COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE – SPECIAL ISSUE

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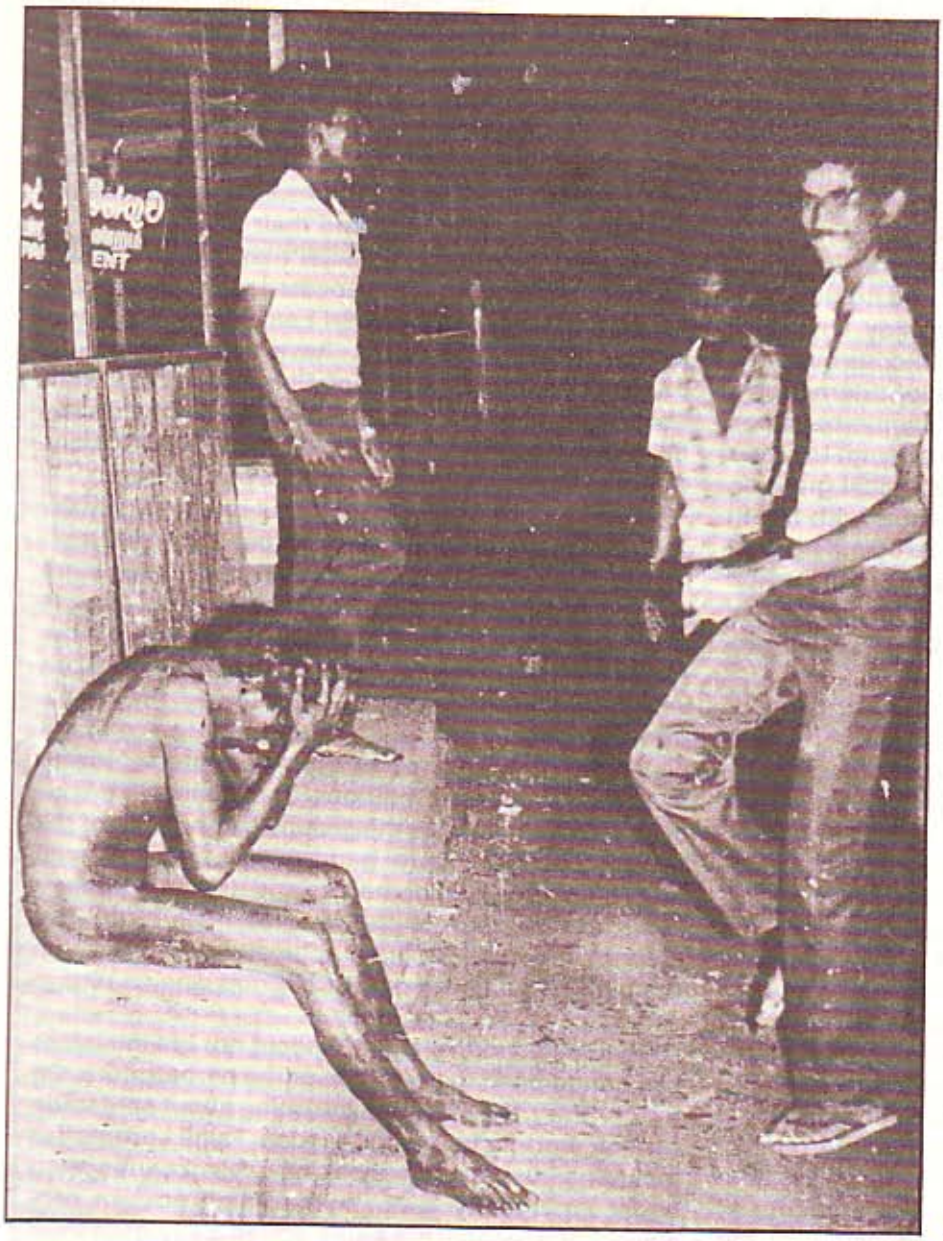
# THE NAKED TRUTH . . .



# AND THE MYTH


taste of Paradise.

*It was in Sri Lanka that Sinbad supposedly discovered his harbour of enchantment.*

*Not everyone believes in Sinbad of course. But once you have visited our coral-fringed island home you'll certainly believe in enchantment.*

*For if ever there was a place where myth and reality blend into one, it must surely be Sri Lanka.*

*A place where every visitor can discover his own ideal of Paradise.*

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*En route, you'll experience a gentle warmth that can only belong to those who live in Paradise.* AIRLANKA

*A taste of Paradise*


**ABOVE**
**A common advertisement which appears in the foreign newspapers and journals**

**LEFT**
**A Tamil youth stripped naked before being burnt alive, while the killers are dancing. The victim is bleeding. This happened at the main bus stand in Borella, Colombo 8, at 1.30a.m. on 24th July. Signboard at the bus stop reads 'New Parliament'**


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Tamil TIMES

On November 24, the Heads of countries of the Commonwealth will meet at New Delhi. Unless the Conference considers the position and plight of all the people who constitute the Commonwealth, there is no meaning in meeting every four years.

Obviously, the invasion of Grenada by the US will become a matter for discussion. By the same token the plight of nearly 3 million Tamil-speaking people of Sri Lanka must be a matter that should concern the Heads of State. If not for anything else, the July 1983 massacre of the Tamils and the consequent displacement of several hundred thousand of them ought to engage the minds of those attending the Conference.

The Government of Sri Lanka will, no doubt, attempt to thwart any effort to raise this matter on the grounds that the 'Tamil problem' is an internal matter for Sri Lanka and that any discussion at Conference level would constitute an 'interference in its internal affairs'. When fundamental and elementary rights of a people are at stake, such as their right to life, property, security, citizenship, franchise and rights which other members of the same country enjoy, when violation of basic human rights is incontrovertibly established by independent bodies of international repute, then, the position of such people becomes the concern of all humanity and any attempt to cover up and thwart any discussion on technical grounds should be discounted. Such is the case with South Africa where the actions of the racist regime against the black people have been the subject of discussion before many an international forum. The question of the position of the Tamils of Sri Lanka is no less different.

The 'Tamil problem' should be of singular concern to the Commonwealth which is nothing but a group of countries which had been previously colonised by the British and been part of the British empire. At the time Britain took control of the Island, then known as Ceylon, the traditional areas of the Tamil people, the Northern and Eastern provinces, were administered separately from the rest of the Island. In 1833, the British brought the whole island under a unified administration and thus brought to an end centuries of separate political and administrative existence of the Tamil areas from the rest of the island. When the British granted independence in 1948, they left it in a unified form with certain constitutional safeguards for the protection of the rights of the minority Tamils.

Disregarding both the spirit and letter of the consitutional safeguards, successive governments of the country, which came to be dominated by the numerically strong (70 per cent) Sinhalese, imposed on the Tamil people severe disabilities.

Within one year after independence, 1.2 million Tamils working in the plantations were deprived of citizenship and their right to vote. Overnight, not only did they lose their basic rights, but also, as a direct result, the Tamils lost almost 50 per cent of representation in the elected assembly. Of this 1.2 million, nearly 300,000 have been forcibly repatriated to India, a mere 100,000 have been given citizenship and the rest have up to date remained stateless and voteless. These people have been subjected to the worst form of discrimination and oppression during the last 35 years. The Commonwealth Heads of Sstate have repeatedly and justifiably waxed eloquent against the racist regime of South Africa. They even adopted the Gleneagles Agreement to cut off sporting links with that country. But up to now they have ignored the plight of a million Tamil plantation workers who have been denied their basic rights merely because they happen to be Tamils. They have allowed successive Sri Lankan governments to parade before world forums as paragons of democracy when they had continued to deny a million people their basic rights on racial grounds. The time has now come for the Commonwealth to take up the question of these people and their rights.

The other most urgent matter that should concern the Commonwealth is the repeated racial pogroms to which the Tamil people of Sri Lanka have been subjected. From 1958, they have been frequently attacked by racist gangs of Sinhalese while State security forces watched approvingly. Within the last six years, the attacks have become more frequent, more widespread, more vicious, even barbaric.

The July 1983 attack on the Tamil people assumed genocidal proportions. Seventy per cent of Tamil homes and property everywhere except Jaffna were burnt down, destroyed or looted. Their women were raped and children burnt in their own houses. All this happened before the very eyes of the security forces who in many instances actively joined the mob's frenzied attacks. Tamil businessmen were completely burnt down and destroyed in scores of towns in an orgy of arson. Traditional Tamil cities like Trincomalee were razed to the ground by sections of the security forces. Many hundred thousand Tamils have been rendered homeless and destitute and are living as refugees in the land of their birth. The slaughter of over 50 Tamil poitical detainees within the high security prison at Colombo was as unprecedented as it was gruesome.

Up to date, neither the President nor his ministers has condemned the violence or the perpetrators. On the contrary, the Ministers are going about spreading further anti-Tamil progaganda. Tamil properties including business premises have been confiscated under emergency laws. In the Tamil eastern province, Tamil people are being driven away from their villages and are being replaced with Sinhalese 'colonists' under ministerial and 'priestly' leadership.

Today, the entirety of the Tamil people are without representation in the elected assemblies of the country. Their MPs have been forced to forfeit their seats. Their parties are virtually banned. Many of them, fearing for their lives, have fled to India. Tamil youths are

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# CYRIL MATHEW'S DIABOLICAL CONSPIRACY

The Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs alias Minister of Anti-Tamil Industry in President Jayewardene's Cabinet, Mr Cyril Mathew, has become the most commented upon personality in the international media, due to his role in the July violence against the Tamils.

He is the author of several anti-Tamil books and pamphlets including *Diabolical Conspiracy* and *Who is the Tiger?*. The *Diabolical Conspiracy*, which is a diatribe against Tamil university lecturers for their alleged favouritism to Tamil undergraduates, proclaims: 'Sri Lanka is a Sinhala Buddhist country although non-Sinhalese and Non-Buddhists too have lived here for a long time. This fact should never be forgotten by the Sinhala Buddhists as well as by the non-Sinhalese and the non-Buddhists.'

In keeping with his mono-religious philosophy, Mr Cyril Mathew has, for a long time, been propagating his pet theory that there were 720 Buddhist shrines in the Tamil Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka which had gone into disuse and that they should be restored, Buddhist priests installed therein and a colony of 'Sinhala Buddhists' should be established around each Buddha Vihare so that they could sustain the temple and the priests.

Recently, at a meeting held in the southern Sri Lankan town of Galle, Mr Cyril Mathew renewed his call to the Sinhala Buddhists to colonise and inhabit the Northern and Eastern Tamil provinces with an view to guarding the 270 Buddha Vihares in the Tamil areas. He declared: 'It is our duty to safeguard and protect these temples and make way for Sinhala Buddhists to live in close proximity to those temples.'

Not content with his campaign within Sri Lanka to alter the demographic profile and population mix in Tamil areas, Mr Cyril Mathew now has gone international. He has addressed a profusely documented publication to the UNESCO chief in Paris, Dr Amadou Mahathar M'Bow. His appeal to the UN organisation is 'to safeguard and preserve the cultural property of Lanka endangered by racial prejudice, unlawful occupation and wilful destruction'. Mr Mathew has addressed this appeal in his capacity as President of the Congress of Buddhist Associations of State Corporations and President of the foundation for the Restoration and Protection of Buddhist Shrines in Lanka.

Incidentally, it is to be observed that many State Corporation vehicles were used to transport Sinhala racist thugs in July to attack Tamils and destroy Hindu temples.

When told of this latest publication by Mr Mathew, one of his Cabinet colleagues said: 'He is the Minister of Industries; but I have never seen a document published concerning industry in Sri Lanka.'

# EDITORIAL

FROM PAGE 2

**'disappearing' after arrest by security forces.**

**In short, the Tamil people face genocide in Sri Lanka.**

**In the meantime, the Sri Lanka government is engaged in arming itself to the teeth with lethal weaponry mainly from the Western countries, including Britain. A contingent from the Lankan army is being trained in Wiltshire in England. All this for what? The 'final solution' for the Tamils?**

**The Commonwealth Heads of State have a duty and a responsibility to consider the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The Government of Sri Lanka should be called upon to account for its inhuman treatment of the Tamil people working in the plantations, for its culpability in the crimes against the Tamil people and its gross dereliction of duty to protect their rights, lives and property.**

# THONDAMAN ON THE WAY OUT

The well-cultivcated strategy of the Sri Lankan government and other Sinhalese leaders to drive a wedge between the indigenous Tamils and Tamils of Indian origin (plantation Tamils) would appear to have misfired with Mr Thondaman, while being a Cabinet Minister, making many statements in the recent past criticising the treatment of Tamils as a whole.

His tirade against his Cabinet colleague Mr Gamini Dissanayake, Minister of Lands & Development, that a concerted attempt was being made to drive the Tamils out of their settlements under various pretexts provoked a counter-statement from Mr Dissanayake.

Mr Thondaman's widely publishedd charge that the July violence against the Tamils was the culminatiaon of a carefully laid-out plan to destroy the properties and belongings of the Tamils and that the security forces indulged in acts of lawlessness, would appear to have irked some of his extremist Sinhala Cabinet colleagues.

The unperturbed Mr Thondaman also suggested in the course of a recent press conference, that the Tamils and the Northern and Eastern provinces should be accorded 'special status' like Kashmir. He also stated that, owing to the vacation of TULF MPs of their parliamentary seats, he had agreed with Mr A Amirthalingam, the TULF leader, to look after the interests of the Tamil people.

Political observers see in Mr Thondaman's current conduct a closing of the ranks among the Tamils to evolve a common position. Whilst his much publicised statements might not be considered consistent with his continued membership of the Cabinet, it is said that he is no longer keen to be content to remain in the Cabinet as a silent spectator, and that he is prepared to take the risk of being sacked. The Ceylon Workers' Congress's refusal to attend the all-Party conference summoned by the President is said to reflect the defiant mood of the C.W.C. and of Mr Thondaman. Mr Thondaman appears to have lost all confidence in President Jayewardene's ability to control the anti-Tamil outpourings of his Sinhala Cabinet colleagues.

# TAMIL NADU WILL PROTECT LIBERATION FIGHTERS

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr M.G. Ramachandran, said his Government would always protect the Eelam 'liberation fighters'. Mr Ramachandran said that the Prime Minister's envoy, Mr G. Parthasarathi, met him and discussed with him matters relating to the Tamils in Sri Lanka before leaving for the Indian Ocean island.

The Chief Minister said whatever charges the Sri Lankan President Mr Jayewardene might raise against him, he would protect the liberation fighters who had sought asylum here. Mr Ramachandran said that they were quite cultured, as must be evident from the fact that though the thugs and anti-social Sinhalese resorted to massacre of the Tamils with the connivance of the Government there, they did not kill a single Sinhalese when they liberated Tamil leaders from the Sri Lankan jail.

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## MINISTER DEWANAYAGAM VS SEELALANKARA THERO

# THE GREAT LAND GRAB

**Mr K.W. Dewanayagam, Minister of Home Affairs in President Jayewardene's Cabinet, has complained that over 25,000 Sinhalese had unlawfully grabbed large areas of fertile land in the Batticaloa district earmarked for distribution among landless Tamils.**

**Addressing a specially convened press conference on October 18, the Minister alleged that a Buddhist monk, Ven. Seelalankara Thero, also known as the Dimbulagala priest, had openly incited Sinhala Buddhist people to illegally occupy the land. He accused high officials of the Mahaveli Authority (which is under Mr Gamini Dissanayake, the Minister of Land and Land Development) of conspiracy in supporting the unlawful encroachment by the provision of transport, food supplies and building materials to the squatters.**

**Charging the country's newspapers with partiality, the Minister said that certain newspapers were highlighting only the encroachment of land by the Tamils but closing their eyes to land-grabbing by the Sinhalese. This is causing resentment among the Tamils, the Minister said.**

The press conference called by Mr Dewanayagam was precipitated by a report in the English daily *Sun* of October 17, 1983, under the banner headline, 'Stateless persons encouraged to encroach on state land in N-E'. The *Sun* is published by the extreme Sinhala chauvinist outfit, the Davasa Group of Newspapers.

Before the press conference, the Minister had protested at the contents of this report in a letter to the newspaper. The letter said:

'I find a publication in your journal of the 17th issue entitled 'Stateless persons encouraged to encroach on State land in N-E'. While reading through the article, it is clear that the facts relate only to Vavuniya and the Northern Region. You have just coupled Batticaloa and the East, just to embrace the Tamil areas.

'For one thing, the reference to Batticaloa is factually wrong. There is no organised exercise to form human buffer zones by stateless persons anywhere in the recent past. I am very much concerned, because this gives a mischievous twist to involve the poiticians of the Batticaloa district, specially when the Eastern Province largely supports the United National Party and the government.

'Out of the 12 Members of Parliament, 10 are UNP members, and if there is any buffer zone, it will be against the TULF although there are so many statements recklessly made with regard to organisations like the Sarvodaya, Red Barna and SEDEC, which I suppose those organisations will answer too, but I must say it does untold damage to the goodwill of these organisations who have always come to the rescue of the people on a national cause. I commend your paper being keen to highlight illegal activities as encroachment on state land; I only regret that when an encroachment on a gigantic scale is taking place at Wadamunai in the Kalkudah electorate by the Sinhalese people, you are blissfully silent.

'This encroachment is highly organised by the Dimbulagala Buddhist priest, who by open advertisement on the 1st of September called on the people to come, and over 25,000 people have occupied the right bank of the Maduru Oya. This is under the Mahaveli Scheme and plan for the development and settlement of the people.

'Millions of rupees are poured into this area as foreign aid and a priest has

- **BUDDHIST MONK ACCUSED OF 'LAND GRABBING'**
- **MEDIA SLAMMED FOR PARTIALITY**
- **MAHAVELI OFFICIALS CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY**

spearheaded this encroachment. The laws that have been made very rigorous with regard to encroachment by the Mahaveli Development Minister very recently are only on paper.

'Please do not involve us in the Batticaloa district when we are in no way connected with this business, just as you sensationally reported the encroachment by the Indians in the North, your sense of fair play will, I have no doubt, prompt you to do the same with regard to the encroachment by the Sinhalese in the Kalkudah electorate in the East. I hope you will give due publication to this so that the facts may be known.'

At the press conference Mr Dewanayagam went on to deal at length with what he called the actions by the 'Dimbulagala Buddhist priest who had settled 25,000 Sinhalese illegally on the right bank of Maduru Oya after the recent July disturbances'.

Charging that Mahaveli officials were involved in the encroachment, Mr Dewanayagam said President J.R. Jayewardene had told the Minister of Mahaveli Development he should resign if people were allowed to settle on state land at their will and pleasure. He also told N.G.P. Panditharatne that if the priest is settling people, he should hand over the chairmanship for the implementation of the Mahaveli settlement scheme to the Dimbulagala priest.

Mr Dewanayagam said: 'We as a minority are members of the United National Party because it is a party with no barriers of race, caste or creed. But, it seems, from President Jayewardene's speech at the executive committee that he is disturbed about certain members trying to make the UNP a Sinhala Buddhist only party. The President told those people that they should quit the party and form one of their own, for the UNP is open to all nationals of Sri Lanka.

'It is the Tamils who have sacrificed their lives for the sake of UNP. Always the Tamil members of the UNP are being harassed by both the Tamil extremists and the others. TULF President M Sivasithamparam and A. Amirthalingam are making capital of the situation by referring to the Madura Oya right bank illegal settlements of Sinhalese. It is a nerve-wracking state of affairs for me.'

He lamented: 'My grievance is that this encroachment is of international consequence with the TULF rhetoric about it in India. The priest's actions have disrupted the entire normal life of villages in Kalkudah electorate, where the encroachment is occurring in Wadamune and Mathavarni on zone 6 and 7 of the right bank of Madura Oya.

'It is very distressing that nobody has attempted to stop this action of the priest, who has broken all principles of government policy.'

Following Minister Dewanayagam's press conference, the Buddhist monk, who is playing the lead role in the land-grabbing exercise, issued a press statement which was given prominence in the *Weekend* of October 23, 1983. In this statement, the Dimbulagala monk declared that the Sinhalese squatters 'could only be evicted if all illegal settlers of Indian origin and other nationals were also evicted from State land in the Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts.

### Monk's violent threat

Suppressing the fact that in these areas most of the settlers of Indian Tamil origin

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# MINISTER NAILS MONK'S FALSEHOODS

Minister of Home Affairs and MP for Kalkudah, K.W. Dewanayagam, in the letter to the *Weekend*, an English Sunday newspaper, says the 'Dambulagala monk is positively engaging in anti-government activities, and is a positive danger to the security of the nation'.

Referring to the *Weekend*'s interview with Ven. Seelalankara Thero, Mr Dewanayagam said:

'The Dimulagala monk has spoken out on the encroachment saying that he has settled Tamils and Muslims among Sinhalese. I believe when he says this, just as the Catholics believe when the Pope speaks ex cathedra because it is the truth, so also the Venerable priest thinks that when he says anything it is the truth. This is not true. The whole of the encroachment is marked by the names of the places from where they came so as to preserve their identity, there is not a single Muslim or Tamil name. I went round personally to all the places and talked to some of them.

'Does the priest expect the people of this country to believe that after the incidents on July 24 and thereafter that the Tamils will opt to live side by side as a community when they are still fearing to come back to their own homes in the affected areas, where they have lived for years in amity and now they fear them as their bitterest enemies?

went there after being displaced as a result of racial violence directed at them since 1958, the monk accused the Minister of encouraging illegal settlements. The monk said: 'In 1971 or 19172, the present Home Affairs Minister K.W. Dewanayagam brought Indian Tamils to Kalkudah and settled them in the area.'

Referring to a statement by District Minister Mr Paul Perera that the Sinhalese encroachers should vacate the illegally occupied land, the Dimbulagala priest charged that the District Minister was indulging in an anti-national exercise and jeopardising the welfare of the nation.

'If he comes to Dimbulagala colonisation scheme to evict the people that we have settled, I will give him a blow with my umbrella,' the monk said.

Challenging the view taken by District Minister Paul Perera, Ven Seelalankara Thero said most of the settlers in Dimbulagala were UNP supporters who had come from various parts of the country.

### Minister's rejoinder

Minister Dewanayagam made a detailed reply to the monk's claims and allegations in a letter to the press (see above).

'Apart from this, there are a number of falsehoods. I do not wish to enter into a controversy over this matter, but I cannot allow statements to go uncontradicted. This is not the first time he has tried to encroach into this area. He brought a number of people in 1972 and I did not allow him. He again tried in 1977; then also I did not allow him. This was during the SLFP regime. This is his third attempt.

'He talks of the acting District Minister indulging in an anti-national exercise. I think the acting District Minister should have taken up the challenge and seen whether his umbrella will break or the acting District Minister's head will break. I cannot understand a Buddhist monk who should preach the precepts of the holy one indulging in the illegal acts such as these. He is positively engaging in anti-government activities and is a positive danger to the security of the nation.

**'What a tragedy, foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests to rest in, but man has no place in this country to rest his head because he is of Indian origin'**

### Holocaust of July 24

'His present action is being watched by the whole world, and this is an act which has been included and pointed out by the enemies of the Government as continuing anti-Tamil atrocities, specially for this priest to start this just after the July 24 holocaust of Tamil minorities. He always appears on the scene after there is such communal disturbance; he did so in 1971 and 1977 alike.

'What is this shadow boxing he is doing, saying 'that we should stand for a united Lanka and protect the sovereignty of the country'; what is he talking of a united Lanka, when he marches into my electorate — I who am part of the Government of the united Lanka he speaks of; who for the last 20 years fought the TULF at every stage against all its policies and I who am keeping the people of my district with me; people of whom 48,000 voted for the President in this election, much more than the whole of Jaffna district.

'It is this priest who is now an ally of the anti-government forces under the phraseology he mouths of protecting the sovereignty. He is a law-breaker and should have been dealt with like any other law-breakers.

'His vague statements lead the people to believe that there are large numbers of Indians settled in the Batticaloa district. The 1971 census gives the number of persons of Indian origin as 3,868.

'The reduction is due to the repatriation. Of this total number 60 per cent are stateless persons, others are citizens. The Indian Tamils form only 1.2 per cent of the population of the Batticaloa district. The percentage is very much less than the Mannar-Bullaitivu area where it is 13 per cent. These persons were settled in the following areas. In the 1971 communal disturbances the people who were drawn from up country came and settled down in Punanai.

'Let us examine the reasons why they came. They were driven out from the areas where they lived and made the place their homes. They came and settled on very difficult terrain where there are no irrigation facilities and not even drinking water and where there were no future prospects of development of this area. But on the contrary, the priest's encroachers are not persons harassed or chased out of their homes. They came because they want to get land which is being developed by the Government, with special facilities and Government assistance.

### Arson by government officers

'When these poor people were driven away they came to places where they thought they will have security of persons and property and elementary human rights which any human being is entitled to. The last Government tried to evict them through its forest officers. They burnt their huts and prosecuted them in the Batticaloa courts. I appeared and defended them. I in turn filed actions for arson against their officers, some of whom were Assistant Conservators of Forest. The officers appeared before the magistrate and when asked by the magistrate whether they had set fire to the huts, they admitted that they did so and the magistrate asked them to come ready to go to jail, because one cannot set fire to somebody else's house even if it is in your land.

'Faced with a problem where his officers had unwittingly placed themselves in this predicament, Mr Felix Dias Bandaranaike called me for a conference to settle this question. In the conference we discussed the illegality and otherwise of these people of Indian origin settling on Crown land; when a person of Indian origin irrespective of the fact that he is an Indian, if he is a citizen, why cannot he have the same rights and privileges like any other citizens. It was decided that people of Indian origin were given LDO permits in the Wadamunai scheme. There is a pact or agreement drawn up between me and Felix Dias Bandaranaike called the Bandaranaike-

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Continued page 18

# DETENTION, TORTURE AND MURDER —SRI LANKA

**by S.A. DAVID**

*Bachelor of Architecture – Melbourne, Australia; Diploma in Town Planning – Leeds, England; Associate, Royal Institute of British Architects; Associate, Royal Town Planning Institute, London; President, Gandhiyam Society, Sri Lanka.*

Any impartial observer of the history of Sri Lanka will surely admit that within living memory the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka, especially Jaffna, were the most law abiding and peaceful land in all Sri Lanka. But now, even Tamils will admit, may even proudly proclaim, that violence is widespread in Tamil lands. How did this come about? A clear understanding of this issue is the key to the solution of the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka.

In all humility I submit my own analysis for consideration of men of goodwill. After independence D.S. Senanayake proceeded to take away the voting rights of one million Tamils in the hill country. He firmly refused to make concessions to minorities and made the Sinhalese the undisputed rulers of the land. He started State colonisation of Tamil lands and planted Buddhist shrines in Tamil lands. Bandaranaike followed this with his Sinhala Only Language bill and supremacy for the Buddhist religion. He drove the Tamils out of Government Service. He made the Tamils second class citizens in Sri Lanka. J.R. Jayawardene took up the trail and, with the use of thugs organised by Cyril Mathew, Premadass, Athulatmudali and Gamini Dissanayake and with the full might of the armed services of Sri Lanka, he has set in motion the economic and physical liquidation of the Tamil race in Sri Lanka. Pashed to the wall, unable to go further, with their very lives at stake, the Tamils and specially the youth have taken up arms in self-defence. This is the inevitable law of Karma, action and reaction. What we have witnessed so far, frightening though it be, is just the beginning of the genocide of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

### Crying shame

Under the so-called Dharmista regime of President J.R.Jayewardene in Sri Lanka, anyone can be arrested and detained without trial, and anyone can be murdered and buried without inquest. Still, Sri Lanka is claimed to be a model democracy of the third world, praised and supported by the capitalist governments of the world, led by America and followed by Germany, Japan, Britain and the Arabs. This situation is a crying shame to the intelligence and conscience of 20th century humanity.

Although the Prevention of Terrorism Act refers to the whole of Sri Lanka, its application has been reserved fo the Tamils and particularly the Tamil youth.

Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act of Sri Lanka a person can be detained for periods up to 18 months (renewable by order every three months) if the Minister has reason to believe or suspect that any person is connected with or concerned in any unlawful activity. Unlawful activity includes even pasting posters on walls and is punishable with death.

There have been ridiculous instances when Judges of Courts have ordered detainees to be kept in Remand Prison. Dutifully the detainees were taken to the Remand Prison, their names entered in Prison Registers and then the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act invoked and the detainees brought for torture to Army Camps. Such is the working of Buddha Dharmista in Sri Lanka.

The bitter pill of Prevention of Terrorism Act has been sugar coated with an apparently humanistic provision to allow appeal within twenty days of arrest to a Board of Three members. This is purely to circumvent the International Human Rights considerations. Yet, in the application of this provision, diabolical intrigues are seen. In my own case, the appeal form was given on the last date for appeal, twenty days after my arrest, but post-dated by ten days. Fraud on a national scale is not outside the capacity of this vile Sinhala dominated Government and its security forces.

I was arrested and detained, tortured and nearly murdered, under the provisions of this inhuman Act and I wish to place on record my experiences in J.R. Jayawardene's jails so that posterity may save itself from the agony of body and soul I have endured.

I am now 59 years of age. By dint of sheer honesty, intelligence and hard work, I rose from humble village conditions to work as an architect and town planner in Sri Lanka, Australia, the United Kingdom, Nigeria and Kenya. With the passing of the Sinhala Only Act in 1958, I resigned my post as architect under the Sri Lanka Government and went overseas, as I truly felt there was no honourable place for a Tamil in Sri Lanka.

The statements of two senior politicians at this time still ring in my ears. Senator Nadesan, an eminent Q.C., said: 'We have come to the parting of the ways. Let us depart in peace;' and Dr Colvin R. De Silva said: 'One language, two nations.' Time has fully vindicated their foresight.

In 1972, I came back to Sri Lanka to devote myself heart and soul to alleviate the suffering of my people, the Tamils. After intense study, by reading and personal observation of many systems around the world, in Europe, America, Israel, Africa and the Far East, I chose the Gandhian model as most suited to the genius and traditions of the soul of my people and proceeded to systematically bring my people to the Gandhiyam way of life.

### Gandhiyam

Together with Dr Rajasundaram of Vavuniya, a tireless energetic worker, in five years we had built up a sound network of District Centres throughout the traditional homelands of the Tamils in Sri Lanka — in Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa. At the time of our arrest, 450 pre- schools, with an average of thirty students each, were providing daily milk and triposha and kindergarten teaching facilities to village children. Twelve model one-acre farms in Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa were showing the villagers the simplest, safest and quickest way to economic, social and cultural revival. Mobile clinics, equipped with basic preventive and curative medicines were making regular rounds to outlying villages. A training centre was preparing thirty to forty young women every three months for Gandhiyam work in their own villages. In addition Gandhiyam with other social service organisations was assisting 5,000 refugee families from tea estates to settle down to a safe life among traditional Tamil villages. The quality and quantity of Gandhiyam work impressed foreign aid organisations and Tamils living overseas so much that we were receiving and operating on a yearly budget of Rs. 5,000,000.

All the time we were aware that the Sinhala Government was keeping its watchful eyes over us. In April 1983 the Government took the decisive step to arrest me and Dr Rajasundaram.

The charges on which we were arrested, as told in the indictment given to us on 22nd July 1983, three and a half months after arrest and solitary confinement and torture of body and mind, were:

1. Meeting Uma Maheswaran and not informing the police;
2. Meeting Santhathiar and not informing the police;
3. Assisting Uma Maheswaran and Santhathiar to escape to India.

We could have been sentenced to fifteen to twenty years imprisonment on these charged.

I have experienced partial freedom and enjoyed it. I wanted total freedom for myself and my people. Instead, I was caught up in total bondage. It was hell. Now I realise total freedom could be heaven indeed.

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### Knock on my door

At 11.30pm on 7th April 1983, there was a knock on my door at room no.9 at the YMCA in Colombo. I answered the door, CID and police officers walked in, led by Mr Punya De Silva, ASP, CID. They opened all cupboards, drawers, boxes, seized all personal documents and ordered me to follow them without any clothes for change. I was taken to the 4th floor of the CID office in the Fort and allowed to sleep on the office table. Next morning, as I sat with fear and confusion, CID officers appeared with grim faces and grinding teeth threatening to dismember me and throw me into the sea. In all fairness, I saw compassion in the faces of some officers and one officer had thoughtfully brought me breakfast from his home. I was questioned by Mr Wijetileke (CID) who was very polite but another officer was constantly threatening me. He rushed at me with clenched fists, and bit me on the shoulders, ordered me to raise my arms and stand in that position for nearly half an hour.

Next day, Mr Punya De Silva interrogated me. At the end of his interrogation, this officer had the courage of his conviction to say 'Mr David I have examined hundreds of people connected with terrorism. In your sincerity and self-sacrifice I have no doubt. I may not agree with your ideals but to the end I will respect you as a gentleman.' A great load was taken off my head. To my dying day, I will remember with gratitude Mr Punya De Silva and Mr Wiljetileke who treated me with extreme politeness and kindness.

### I was stripped

That evening I was told that the Minister of Defence had ordered me to be detained in the Army Camp at Panagoda. Mr Wiljetileke took me to Panagoda and handed me over the the Army. Immediately after he left nearly 20 soldiers surrounded me and ordered me into a corner. Someone gave a command and a soldier hit me on my chest. I urinated. They ordered me to take off my shirt and trousers. All of them had a hearty laugh at my nudity and there were loud obscene comments. They ordered me to walk past the soldiers and, as I went, they struck me with hands and legs. I was taken to a solitary cell and locked up. In the morning, fellow Tamil detainees distributing brushes for cleaning and pouring tea cheered me up. From then on during morning and evening inspection, Commander Udagampala would threaten to kill me. Soldiers on guard would come with leather belts and razor blades and order me to put my hands out of the iron-grill door, threatening to cut off my fingers. They would order me to stand up on the concrete bench, keep my hands raised and rotate. They would scold me in obscene language and curse the Tamils. I was not able to meet a lawyer for a fortnight. Immediately I met Mr Kumaralingam, Advocate, I told him of my experience and requested him not to communicate this with anyone fearing the Army would retaliate. But he sent telegrams with very highly exaggerated details to the President, Army and Police chiefs. In three days, the Army got wind of Kumaralingam's complaint and I was put in hand cuffs for four days and nights continuously. I was not allowed to bathe for two weeks and not allowed any reading material.

There is some justification for arrest, detention and imprisonment of actual terrorists but among the detainees at Panagoda there were many innocent people.

There was Jayadas, a young man of 24, who had no connection with any 'terrorist' activity. He had given Rs.50,000 to an agent to obtain work in the Middle East and the agent, to get rid of him, handed him over to the CID who promptly put him in detention. e nearly escaped at Welikade prison and still is in detention at Batticaloa prison.

There was Balasingam, a man of 50 years, nearly blind. He had transported dymanite to dig a well. He was arrested and was in detention. With the assistance of powerful Sinhalese advocates he was released just before the mass murders at Welikade prison.

There was Ganashalingam, aged 26, from Vavuniya. A gun had been thrown into the shop where he was working when he was not there, by certain unidentified youth who attacked Air Force personnel. He was detained and murdered at Welikade prison.

There were many youths who had carried posters. There were youths who had attended classes on Marxist philosophy. There were youths who were taken with books on Eelam, a separate state for Tamils.

There was Dr S.A. Dharmalingam, 75 years old, who after the savage massacres of the Tamils at Trincomalee by Navy personnel, had called the Tamils to defend themselves.

There was Kovai Mahesan, 46 years old, editor of 'Suthanthiran' who was openly advocating Eelam over the past decade.

All were classed as terrorists, detained and tortured, irrespective of age or status and treated worse than condemned criminals.

The extent of the irresponsible and vindictive nature of the arrests and detention of Tamils under the infamous Prevention of Terrorism Act can be gauged from the above accounts.

### Drunken Commander

After Dr Rajasundaram was brought to the Panagoda army camp, the attack on the Tamil detainees became very frequent and more vicious. Almost every other day and whenever he was in the mood, Commander Udugampola would come drunk, with a glass of arrac in his hand, and opened the cells, stripped the detainees and assaulted and kicked and cursed them. I could hear cries of pain and groans throughout the nights and early mornings and see naked colleagues hanging head down from high window bars. I saw naked detainees being chased around the courtyard and being assaulted and kicked by six to eight soldiers with PVC pipes and iron rods in their hands.

One day Commander Uduggampola came drunk and opened my cell, ordered me to strip and lie face down on a concrete bench. He ordered three soldiers to trample my back and legs and hit me on my buttocks. They left me exhausted on the bench.

On another day, he came drunk, entered my room with shoes in his hand and hit me on my head and face. My lips split and started bleeding. He ordered me to wash, and left me to sleep naked throughout the night.

### Rajasundaram Severely Attacked

In comparison to the torture meeted out to the other detainees I must admit I was mildly treated. Dr Rajasundaram was severely attacked, his left hand dislocated, his ear drums broken and left on several occasions unconscious on the floor. Manickam Thassan and Robert were singled out for ferocious attacks and for weeks after the attack, they would drag themselves to take their meals, in severe pain and often unable to walk.

More than the physical torment the psychological torment was the most unbearable. Eelam was the centre of all obscenities and every soldier, whenever he left like it, would cast rude remarks about Tamils.

One day Dr Rajasundaram was ordered to walk on all fours, hands and legs, and bark like a dog. We were very often ordered to carry out food on our heads and walk briskly. On another occasion, a youth was ordered to crawl through mud and water around the courtyard. Ingenious ways were devised to destroy the self-respect and spirit of the detainees.

### Sadistic habit

One of the most unbearable incidents at Panagoda army camp was the sadistic habit of regularly bringing school cadets between the ages of fifteen to twenty at weekends and allowing them to watch, grin and cast remarks at us as we were ordered to run and remove our food placed on the floor in front of them. A running commentary on each of us was given by some soldiers to these boys. The Army is perhaps taking care to raise a new generation of Tamil-haters, to maim and torture Tamils in years to come.

There was a corporal with morbid curiosity to see nudes. He ordered me one day to undress in my cell. I refused and from that

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day till I left Panagoda, whenever he was on duty he would subject me to 'mild' torture. He would order me to stand on the bench in the cell with hands raised for hours on end, or to keep jumping in the cell, or to keep turning round and round for hours. There was no use complaining as that would have brought more torture. Once I complained against a corporal, so he and the sergeant on duty handcuffed me to the iron gate of the cell but released me in half an hour on news of the arrival of the Commander.

During the days I was kept handcuffed for for days and nights continuously, one cold night my hands and legs became benumbed. I felt the numbness creeping towards my chest. I was in mortal panic. An uncontrollable shiver seized me. I was falling away from the concrete bench. All the while the corporal on duty was calmly watching me as if he wished me to wriggle to death. I remembered that the compassionate sergeant (referred to later) was on duty and I called out to him. He came, removed the handcuffs, rubbed down my hands and legs, brought a blanket and asked me to lie down and sleep. I told him that if the Commander came he would punish me and him too. He said the Commander was on leave and not to worry and have a sound sleep as he was in charge that night.

### Detainees beaten to death

However, torture remains etched in my mind. When Commander Udugampola was away, another young commissioned officer came drunk one day, ordered us, about 34 in all, naked into the courtyard. It was a cold rainy night and there were 3 inches of water in the courtyard 30' x 60'. He asked us to lie flat on the ground and drag ourselves on our hands and knees up and down in the courtyard pool. The officer and the soldiers were highly thrilled at this ingenious method and were rocking with laughter for days after the event.

I later heard from other colleagues, at Welikade where I got a chance to talk to them, that detainees had been beaten to death at Gurunagar and Elephant Pass Camps. Bottles, iron rods and sticks had been driven into rectums. Chilli powder was applied and its smoke forced through nostrils and mouth. They were beaten with iron bars and iron pipes until they bled, cut with broken bottles, beaten and kicked unconscious, starved for days, forced to eat food with excess salt and kept chained to walls with hands raised for long periods continuously. Some were in detention for over two and a half years and had undergone torture all this time.

### Compassionate Sergeant

In the midst of all these bodily and mental tortures, a pure ray of boundless compassion has left an indelible mark on my soul. I experienced to the very limit of its content the compassion of the great Buddha. This is the nature and action of a Sinhalese Army Sergeant. As the detainees were being beaten and kicked and hung up he would look with tear-filled eyes and when all was quiet, open the cells and apply balm and rub us down and cover us with warm clothes.

All the sad moments I have gone through is as nothing for the rare meeting and companionship of this great soul. How noble and how great Sri Lanka would have been if its leaders could have had in their soul a hundredth part of the compassion in the soul of this sergeant.

### Transfer to Welikade

Around the middle of June 1983, the detainees bringing brushes and brooms and tea whispered that we were to be taken to Welikade prison. There would be no more torture. We could have visitors, be allowed to talk to others and read books and papers. Generally, there were smiles, sometimes jokes and laughter in the cells, after this news. The day of partial deliverance did come on 27th June 1983. We were taken to Welikade prison in a convoy of military trucks, armoured cars and jeeps, large enough for a full-scale battle. The compassionate sergeant, unable to contain his utter disdain of the Army's tactics, openly remarked: 'I will take these 34 people to Jaffna and bring them back alone in a CTB coach!'. This is the measure between truth and falsehood.

At Welikade prison there was no fear of physical attack but the condition of food, toilet facilities and sanitation were poor. In the first two weeks almost all contracted bowel disease. Some were taken to the prison hospital but ill-treated by the Sinhala prison doctors and nurses. The rice was full of stones and the food was tasteless and insipid.

Only fifteen minutes was allowed for outdoor exercise: for 23 hours and 45 minutes we were locked up in solitary cells. Ten minutes was allowed for morning ablution and toilet. If we wanted to go to the toilet at any other time, we had to shout and beg the jailers to open our gates, which was done with great reluctance and sometimes with rude remarks.

### To youth ward

The case against me and Dr Rajasundaram was taken up in the courts at Buller's Road on July 22, 1983 when Dr Rajasundaram requested the judge to transfer us to the Remand Prison from the Detention Prison. The judge agreed and both were transferred to the Youth Ward, along with the Reverend Fathers, Dr Dharmalingam, Dr Jeyakularajah, Mr Nithiananthan and Kovai Mahesan, on July 23, 1983.

### Prison Slaughter

On July 25, 1983 the Sinhala prisoners attacked the detainees in the Chapel Section of the prison and murdered 35 persons among whom were Kuttimany, Jegan and Thangathurai. From eye witness accounts, Kuttimany's eyes were gouged and his blood drunk by his attackers. After killing six Tamils including Kuttimany in one wing, theattackers killed 29 Tamils in the other wing. A boy of 16 years, Mylvaganam, had been spared by the attackers and was crouching in a cell. A jail guard spotted him and stabbed him to death.

The 35 dead were heaped in front of the statue of Gautama Buddha in the yard of Welikade prison, as Minister Athulathmudali so aptly described as a 'sacrifice to appease the blood thirsty cravings of the Sinhala demons'.

Some who were yet alive raised their heads and called for help but were beaten down to death in the heap.

The attackers then made entry into the other wing through openings in the first floor but the jailers there refused to give the keys and persuaded them to leave.

### Second Massacre

28 Tamil detainees in this wing were transferred to the ground floor of the Youth Ward and nine of us were accommodated on the First Floor. All was quiet on the 26th. On the 27th at 2.30pm there was shouting around Youth Ward and armed prisoners scaled boundary walls and started to break open gates in the Youth Ward. Nearly 40 prisoners armed with axes, swords, crowbars, iron pipes and wooden legs appeared before our door and started to break the lock. Dr Rajasundaram walked up to the door and pleaded with them too spare us as we were not involved in any robberies or murders and as Hindus we did not believe in violence and as Buddhists they should not kill. The door suddenly opened and Dr Rajasundaram was dragged out and hit with an iron rod on the head. He fell among the crowd. The rest of us broke the chairs and tables and managed to keep the crowd at bay for half an hour. The Army arrived, threw tear gas bombs and dispersed the crowd. Then the two soldiers lined up eight of us and were taking aim to shoot when the Commander called out from below to them to come down. Then the soldiers chased us down and all who escaped death were lined up on the footpath in front of the Youth Ward. As we walked out, we saw corpses of our colleagues around us and we heard prisoners shouting that it was a pity we were allowed to live.

We were ordered to run into a mini-van and removed out of the prison compound and loaded into an Army truck. We were ordered to lie face down on the floor of the truck and a few who raised their heads were trampled down by the soldiers. All along

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the way to Katunayak e Airport some soldiers kept cursing the Tamils and Eelam and using obscene language. We were kept at the airport till early morning. We were refused even water. We were then taken into an Air Force plane, ordered to sit with out heads down until we reached Batticaloa Airport. From there we were taken in an open van to Batticaloa prison. Here, we were received with sympathy and smiles. Hot tea was served to us. We felt we had returned to sanity and some measure of safety.

### The Escape

Batticaloa prison by comparison was heaven on earth. We were behind bars, of course, but there was human dignity. In Batticaloa we learned that a maximum security prison was being built in a feverish hurry at Homagama in the Sinhala area. With all the nightmarish experience of the past, we could well imagine what hell it would be for the rest of our lives. We resolved to break jail even in the face of death and after meticulous co-ordinated activity from inside and out, we broke jail on September 23, 1983. We are happy that all the political prisoners have escaped from the clutches of the blood-thirsty Sinhala savages. We have dedicated ourselves, if necessary at the cost of our lives, to free the Tamils from the strangle-hold of the Sinhala demons.

After missing Uma Maheswaran's Group with which I was to escape, I was finally traced and brought back to safety by his comrades. The ingenuity and the expertise with which they organised and executed my escape is a thrilling episode in the history of the Tamils and I hope some day to relate it in detail so that future generations of Tamils may know that, even in the darkest hour, there was courage and bravery among the Tamils reaching down to humble homes in villages and jungles.

### I Dedicate Myself

The Sri Lanka Government is already making massive military preparations, backed by the full financial, material and technical skill of all the capitalist countries of the world, to execute this dire deed. I cry out to the conscience of men of goodwill around the world, particularly to the Tamils spread around the globe, to do their utmost to prevent this holocaust and save the Tamils from the clutches of the Sinhala racists. For myself, I dedicate my body and soul, every breath of my existence, to this cause. Tamils in Sri Lanka have hesitated to read the writing on the wall, held on to their wealth and property and lost it all in the flood of Sinhala attacks. Let not the Sri Lankan Tamils overseas cling on to their wealth and lie idle and see their brethren sink into oblivion in the land of their birth.

**S.A. DAVID**
**MADRAS**

# BOOK REVIEW

**SRI LANKA — The National Question and the Tamil Liberation Struggle**

**Published by Zed Books Ltd, in association with the Tamil Information Centre, 11 Beulah Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR4 8JH**

This book by Satchi Ponnambalam, now a judge in Belize, is the first one by a Tamil Sri Lankan to expose the rampant social and ethnic conflicts which ravage the island from time to time, behind the subjective veil of bourgeois media propaganda romanticising Sri Lanka as a Third World 'paradise isle in the sun' where parliamentary democracy thrives under ideal conditions and where the investment potential for the multinationals is abundant and secure due to the peace and calm prevailing there.

The author deals with a wide range of documented facts presented throughout the eight chapters of the book and supported with references. He traces the history of the island's two main nationalities, their colonial subjugation and the developments during the post-independence period. The book provides the reader with a detailed record of the various discriminatory measures as an insight into the systematic manipulation which successive Sinhalese-dominated governments resorted to, to slash at the vital interests of the Tamils, beginning from the Act disenfranchising the Tamil estate workers, the Official Language Act of 1956 which made Sinhala the only official language of the country, the state-sponsored takeover of traditional Tamil homelands under the guise of development, to the anti-Tamil pogroms of 1958, 1977, 1981 and 1983.

Satchi correctly analyses the imagined fears of the Sinhalese majority which arise out of a minority complex, a most unique situation, which the politically bankrupt Sinhalese ruling elite have exploited fully to their advantage by injecting a racial bias, so as to ensure the protection of their interests through reliance on neo-colonialism for survival.

The role of the conservative Tamil leaders, who for over three decades monopolised the political scene in the Tamil north and east of the island, relying on romantic demagogy and opportunism and their failure to develop any realistic political strategy or tactic based on class and economic contradictions and their readiness to alienate progressive sections among the Tamils and Sinhalese, is also dealth with, without, of course, ignoring how the two main parties of the left, the LSSP (Lanka Sama Samaja Party) and the CP (Communist Party) consisted of armchair socialists who could not advance Marxian theoretical discourses towards a revolutionary socialist struggle or even lead the struggle against national oppression to support the right to self-determination of the Tamil people.

The author has done well to ground his analysis on a historical materialist basis from the volume of relevant facts available, from social anthropology, religion, culture and history of the Tamils and Sinhalese to expound the moral behind the rationale of the National Question and the right of the Tamil people to self-determination in their quest for nationhood separately identifiable from the Sinhalese, ever since their historic decision in the 1977 general election. This is a book of wide ranging scholarship and is bound to influence generations of Tamilss in the coming decades in their revolutionary struggle for liberation.

**R.S.G.**


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# 'DUSHTA' GAMINI DISSANAYKE & HIS RACIST 'GEMS'

Mr Gamini Dissanayke, the Minister of Lands and Land Development in President Jayewardene's Cabinet has suddenly become the champion of the Sinhalese and of Buddhism. He is trying to outbid the notoriously racist Industries Minister, Mr Cyril Mathew, in the war-cry against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka. He is no longer the simple and amiable Gamini known to his contemporaries in the Ceylon Law College. Now he is often referred to as 'Dutu Gamini', which he seems to encourage. Dutu Gamini was the Sinhalese king who defeated the Tamil king Elara in a battle around 200 BC according the legend-filled Sinhala Chronicle, Mahavamsa.

Incidentally, Gamini Dissanayake was one of the two ministers (the other being Cyril Mathew) who was present in Jaffna in May-June 1981 when the Jaffna Public Library and half of Jaffna City were burnt down by security personnel who went on a rampage through the city and its environs.

The struggle for succession to President Jayewardene, who is 77, has begun in earnest within the ruling United National Party and Gamini Dissanayake is one of the pretenders to the Jayewardene mantle.

On September 5, 1983, Gamini Dissanayake addressed the Executive Committee of the Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union. Here are some of this modern Dushta Gamini's racist 'gems' from that speech:

- Even today Thondaman has spoken in Parliament supporting Mr Amirthalingham and the struggle of the people in the north for their rights. Our Buddhist priests and Sinhala youths have been enraged by this. We have calmed them with great difficulty.
- Who attacked you? Sinhalese. Who protected you? Sinhalese. It is we who can attack and protect you.
- They are bringing an army from India. *It will take 14 hours to come from India. In 14 minutes, the blood of every Tamil in the country can be sacrificed to the land, by us.*
- It is not written on anyone's forehead that he is an Indian tamil or a Jaffna Tamil, a Batticaloa Tamil or up-country Tamil, Hindu Tamil or Christian Tamil. All are Tamils.
- We have decided to colonise four districts including Mannar with Sinhalese people by destroying forests. A majority of Sinhalese will be settled there. If you like, you also can migrate there.

**PUBLIC MEETING ON**

**HUMAN RIGHTS IN SRI LANKA**

**Speakers**

**Tony Benn**
**Jeremy Corbyn, MP**
**John Chowcatt (ASMTS)**
**Rajes Balasubramaniam**

**Thursday December 1st at 7.00p.m.**

**at**
**Hampstead Town Hall**
**(Belsize Park Tube Station)**
**Haverstock Hill**
**London, NW3**

# BATTICALOA JAILBREAK

It has now become clear that the mastermind behind the Batticaloa jailbreak, in the course of which 42 Tamil political detainees escaped to freedom, was Mr S.A. David, the President of Gandhiyam, who was also detained along with others under the Prevention of terrorism Act.

Ever since the slaughter of 52 Tamil political detainees in the Welikade maximum security prison in Colombo on July 25th and 27th this year, the rest of the detainees had been living in fear of the prospect of themselves also being killed. No sooner they were transferred from Colombo to the Batticaloa jail, they had decided to escape.

Mr David provided the inspiration. His view was that it was better to be killed in the course of an escape attempt than to be murdered in their own cells.

### Different groups

The Tamil political detainees in the jail belonged to different liberation groups and some belonged to no groups at all. They included those belonging to the Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT), Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLEF), Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) and Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS). The situation was made more difficult by the fact that there was a degree of rivalry and even hostility among the different groups. In this context, a united escape attempt seemed almost impossible even to contemplate.

Mr David, whose dedication, honesty and ability was beyond question, provided the rallying point. In the first instance, he initiated discussions with some detainees belonging to the PLOT who undertook to go along with a collective plan for the escape. After strenuous efforts, Mr David succeeded in bringing together the different factions to agree on the escape plan.

Being an architect by profession, Mr David made out a plan of the entire jail structure. Specific tasks were allocated to individuals belonging to the different groups. Once the escape plan was agreed by all the groups, messages were smuggled out to the organisations outside to make the necessary arrangements.

### Plan advanced

A 24-hour watch was kept over a period of six weeks to observe the movement of security personnel who were guarding the jail. Jailers' movements and their change of duty patterns were subjected to minute scrutiny. A large map of the surrounding countryside, compasses and first aid equipment were obtained.

The original plan to break jail on September 26th had to be advanced to the 23rd. This was because they received information that some of the detainees were to be transferred to Colombo to appear before a Court on September 26th.

The response from outside was not of the same degree from the different organisations. The PLOT would seem to have taken a major part from outside. While the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam provided transport and other facilities to its members once they broke jail, the PLOT would appear to have organised the transportation of the others up to Trincomalee from where the respective organisations took charge of their members.

The meticulous way in which the escape was planned and executed was remarkable to say the least. However, it is regrettable that the collective effort made from within the jail was not made use of to bring about the much needed unity outside among the different groups. Instead, one witnesses the sad spectacle of rival claims being made as to the respective roles in the escape effort thereby creating further disunity.

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# SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT CHARGED WITH ATROCITIES

## COMPLAINT TO UNITED NATIONS

**The President of the Tamil United Liberation Front, Mr M. Sivastamparam, has addressed a detailed complaint to the Hon. Kurt Herndl, Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights at the United Nations concerning the violence and discrimination the Tamil people of Sri Lanka have been subjected tu and particularly in respect of the July 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom.**

**The following are extracts from Mr Sivasithamparam's letter:**

Ostensibly the Government gives as its excuse the unfortunate killling of 13 Sinhalese soldiers in the Tamil district of Jaffna peninsula. No explanation is given as to the cause of the incident, the constant and perpetual hectoring and harassment of innocent civilians taken for questioning to torture camps and subjected to inhuman indignities in clear violation of the Sri Lanka Constitution of 1978 which solemnly declares that torture is abolished. In actual fact torture has become a way of life for the army of occupation in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka. The horrors of state terrorism in the Tamil areas cries forth for an independent commission of jurists appointed by an international body which should be empowered to apportion the blame and order the restitution of property and just and due compensation to the victims. In all this violence by the state, no Sinhala civilian has been attacked or subjected to harassment in the Tamil areas.

In the six years that President J. R. Jayewardene's government has been in existence, there have been four violent anti-Tamil 'pogromising' campaigns perpetrated on a people with a proud history who have also sustained, as well as contributed immensely, to the economic development of Sri Lanka. All this, despite the fact that substantial numbers of the Tamil population are denied franchise and citizenship rights and are treated like helots in the country of their birth.

In 1977, President Jayewardene proffered the excuse that the armed forces had been infiltrated by soldiers specially recruited by Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike's 1970-77 United Front Government. It was his undertaking to us, the members of parliament representing the Tamil United Liberation Front, that he would weed the army of these disturbing elements. Not merely was such a promise made. The President undertook to recruit members of the Tamil minority ethnic group at least in proportion to their population to the police and the armed forces so that they may have a fair visibility in these two vital instruments for the maintenance of law and order. I categorically state that other than increasing the Tamil personnel in the police force in the Jaffna peninsula, the President continues, six years after he came to office, to provide the same excuses of army infiltration by Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike's agents. We have therefore ceased to place any credence in these 'official explanations' which are obviously meant for world consumption.

The Sinhala-dominated armed forces perpetrated acts of unspeakable barbarity on the civilian population in the cities and towns of the Tamil majority Northern Province as well as in the heavily Tamil populated Trincomalee district in east Sri Lanka. I appeal to the liberal body of world opinion in the various international organisations, legislatures, political parties, trade unions, churches and other bodies to pay heed to the systematic 'pogromisation' of a minority which is entitled to its due rights in the geographic and artificially constituted administrative expression referred to as Sri Lanka. I take the responsibility of charging the Government of Sri Lanka with the following acts of barbarity and the perpetration of actrocities:

1) On 16th August 1977, systematic police violence resulted in the death of some 300 Tamils, injury to over 10,000 people, raping of about 200 Tamil women, destruction and looting of property belonging to Tamils worth about a billion rupees and the expulsion from their homes in the southern Sinhalese district of some 50,000 Tamil people. I categorically state that the armed forces were directly involved in the killing, looting and destruction of Tamils and their property in Jaffna, Vanuniya, Trincomalee, Colombo, and other places. The President is reported to have told the New Delhi correspondent of the BBC, 'the recent riots revealed a serious lack of discipline in the armed forces and there is strong anti-Tamil feeling among the troops and in some cases they *actually* encouraged rioting'. Because of the inability of government to exercise the much needed discipline, the same pattern was repeated in an uglier form in the anti-Tamil rioting and pogroms of 1981 and 1983. In fact the armed forces not merely '*actually* encouraged the rioting', they *actively* encouraged looting and arson and in numerous instances were involved in murder and pillage. We do not hear of the British armed forces going on a rampage against the three million Irishmen in England when a British soldier is killed in Belfast. Our party would, however, make it clear that it stands for the Gandhian principles of non-violence and non-cooperation to achieve its ultimate goals.

2) Prior to 1977, there was systematic and organised violence against the Tamil minority. In 1956, just eight years after Sri Lanka obtained its independence, the Sinhalese mob organised by Sinhalese political leaders in the governing party of that time led attacks of murder, arson and looting against the Tamils. In 1958, the incidence of violence was at its peak, though the events of July—August 1983 make 1958 appear a street brawl. It was the same in 1961. Army violence in the Tamil districts thereafter became the prevalent method of dealing with the civilian population.

3) The most barbaric and inhuman acts of man's cruelty to man took place in the months of June, July and August 1983. On 3rd June 1983, the Mansion Hotel in Trincomalee was attacked. Thereafter violence prevailed on an ongoing basis. Sinhala hoodlums actively encouraged by the army were responsible for looting, damage to property and the killing of 31 Tamils.

4) On 26th July, the Government admitted that 150 naval men had gone on the rampage and destroyed about 200 Tamil business places and houses in Trincomalee town in six hours. With police assistance another 200 Tamil houses were burnt in Trincomalee district and 1,500 people were rendered homeless. To make matters worse, a responsible officer such as the commander of the navy forcibly transported 600 of the refugees to unknown destinations. These people were voters in the Trincomalee district but they were sent back to the plantations from whence they had arrived. Government officials from Colombo had been to Trincomalee a number of times to hatch this diabolical plot.

5) In the Tamil populated district of Vavuniya, it was no different. The wife of a Tamil man was raped by two air force men on 30th July. The next day they wanted the daughter made available to them. On 25th

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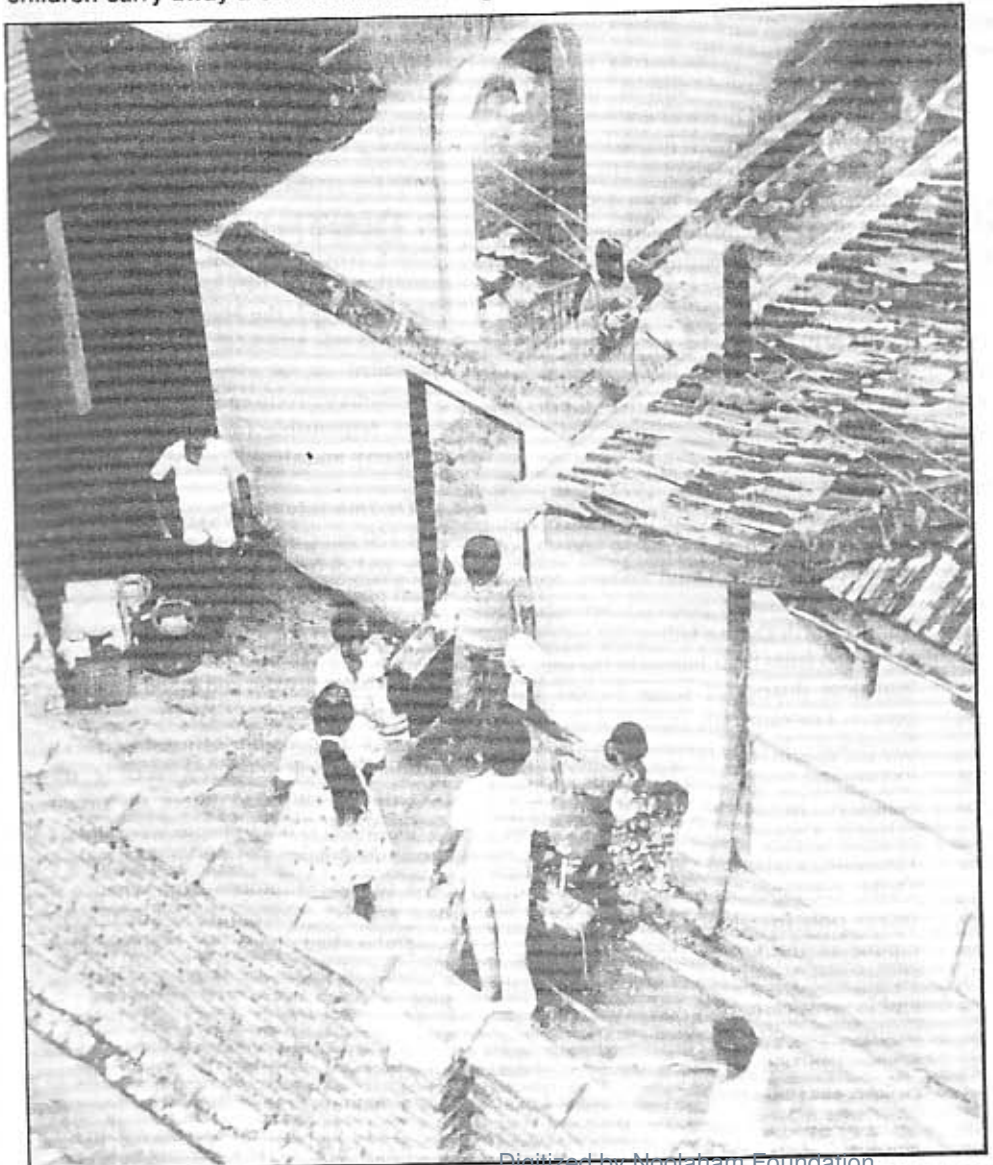
# ANTI-TAMIL VIO

Above: After looting the first house and setting it on fire, the looters are busy emptying the contents of the opposite house. They are helping themselves to an electric cooker.

Below: Sinhala women and children did not escape the urge to loot. See how small children carry away a suitcase full of things.



A Tamil man, after having been murdered, i residence of President Jayewardene at Wa

Sinhala racist mob 'celebrate' the burning in Colombo

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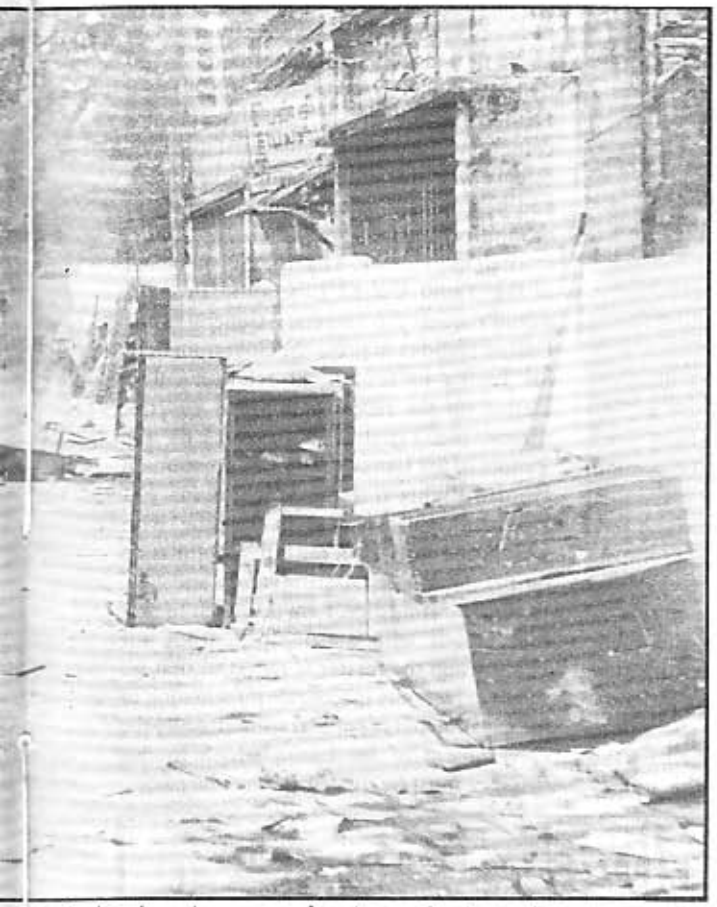
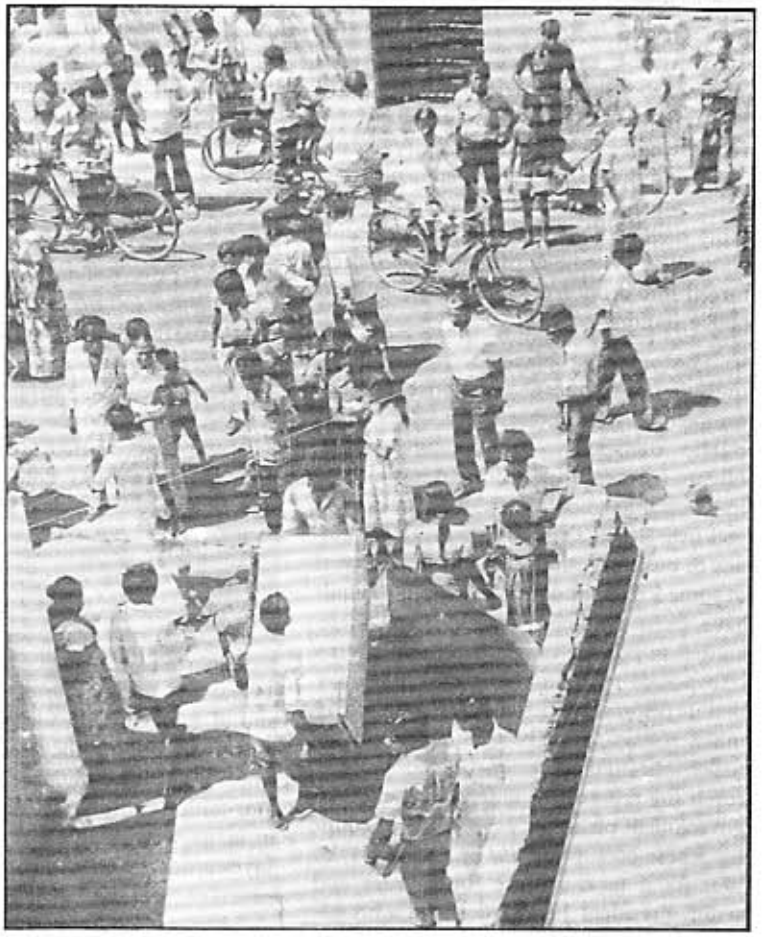
# VIOLENCE, JULY 1983

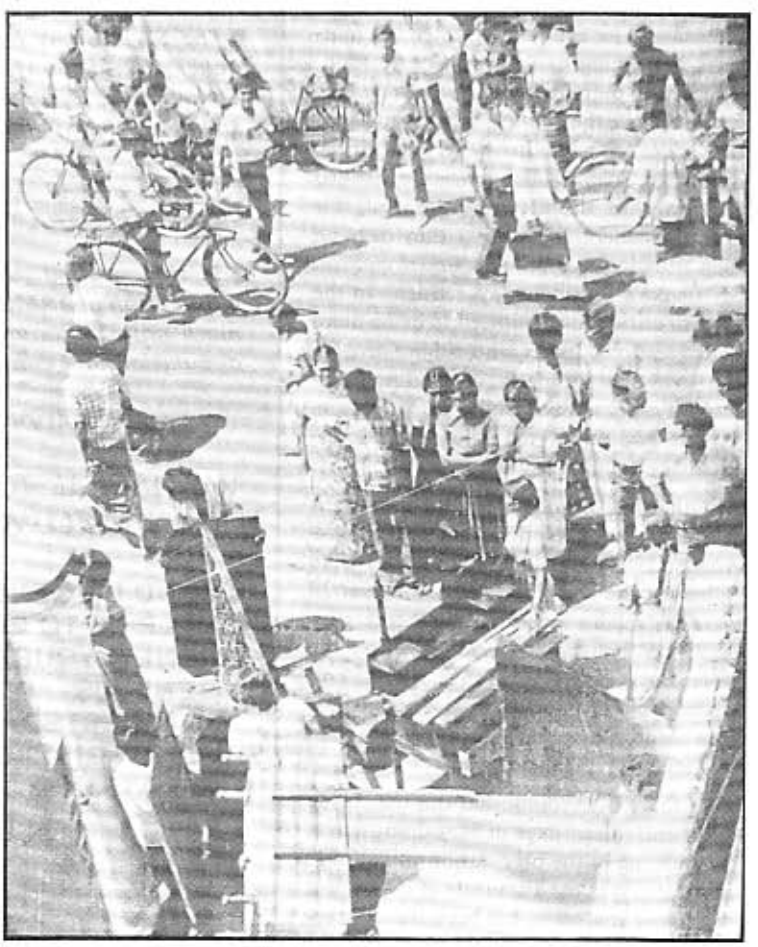


ed, is being burnt on a road not very far from the private
at Ward Place, Colombo 7

ng of shops belonging to Tamils on July 25 at 12.30a.m.



Above: Another scene of looting — the size or weight of articles did not matter. Articles from a Tamil house, including beds and dressing table being carried away.Below: Looters carry away a refrigerator. This is taking place during curfew hours in the presence of a large crowd



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July, a truck transporting oil to Tamil districts in short supply was set on fire and four men were killed by air force men. During June—August 1983 private buses and vans plying between the capital city of Colombo and the Tamil Jaffna peninsula were systematically attacked and damaged by army men stationed in Mankulam. Tamil women in Vavuniya district have been forced into army trucks and crowded into police stations.

6) The foulest acts of violence were enacted in Colombo with the assistance of government party supporters and state-owned public transport — buses and trains. Ninety per cent of Tamil houses and business establishments have been destroyed and over 2,000 Tamil lives lost. The damage to business establishments is estimated at some $500 million. Over 100,000 Tamils have been rendered homeless and were housed in refugee camps before they were transported to Jaffna. The state imagines that its responsibilities are over and there is much reason to doubt whether aid channelled through government sources will reach the refugees or enter the pockets of government placemen especially in a country where corruption has become a way of life. As if to encourage the murder and arson, President Jayewardene, in a broadcast to the nation on TV and radio on 29th July 1983, stated that he had 'to pay heed to the demand and national feeling of the Sinhala people' and he was therefore introducing the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution outlawing the demand for a separate state. The President's statement indicates a yawning gap in the Constitution. There is no dignified head of the state who can rise above the political conflict and hold the scales evenly. In 1958, the prime mininster, Solomon Bandaranaike, handed all power to the Governor-General, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, and within days an ugly situation was brought under control. Sri Lanka's President Jayewardene in the present crisis proved himself to be no more than a sectional leader who did not care for the lives and property of an important minority such as the Tamils, many of whom in fact had supported him at the presidential election.

7) Other acts of violence should be brought to the attention of the world. In July—August 1983, fifty innocent persons were killed by the army in Jaffna of whom 20 were university lecturers, engineers, students and housewives, reminiscent of the worst days of General Yahya Khan's collapsing rule in Bangladesh. Despite homicide verdicts by judicial officers, no action was taken by the state.

8) If there is anything that can match the most uncivilised days of Nazidom, it was the burning of the precious library of pristine learning in the Tamil city of Jaffna. But worse and more foul has been the destruction of the temples of our Gods and the images of our Gods themselves in the Trincomalee district. Not only in 1983, but in 1958, 1977 and 1981, Hindu temples have been the targets of attack and desecration. In 1977 alone 18 Hindu temples were attacked.

9) The most inexcusable act of state negligence was the savage mutilation and murder of 52 Tamil political prisoners (some of them suspects, others awaiting trial) in the state's maximum security gaol in Welikade. We have reason to believe that the murders were condoned, if not in fact inspired by the state. A proper and thorough investigation is bound to reveal that political leaderrs in the governing party could possibly have been involved.

Our party, The Tamil United Liberation Front, at various times tried to come to a mode of peaceful co-existence with the Jayewardene Government. We agreed to work the Distric Development Councils scheme as a way of sharing power at the periphery and of achieving for our people the much needed autonomy they had been seeking since Sri Lanka obtained independence. Our faith has been misplaced and we have in many ways been short-changed by the Jayewardene Government on the undertakings it had given us in the past four years.

The sharp evidence of a lack of a civilised code of conduct which can restrain a government and its hoodlums calls for investigation at the highest international level. Democratic life in Sri Lanka has almost come to a standstill because of state interference with the judiciary, the forces of law and order, with presidential commissions of inquiry, the free press and even public-spirited individuals. That is why, on behalf of the Tamil United Liberation Front, I would request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to press the Government of Sri Lanka to submit all relevant information on the recent communal violence against the Tamils and pogroms on the Tamils in Sri Lanka to the Commission on Human Rights at its fortieth session.

I make this request in keeping with Resolution 1983/16 of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. I am prepared to present myself with a delegation from our Front when the matter is raised so that we might correct any inaccurate information or information out of context submitted by the Government of Sri Lanka which in this instance must be treated as a hostile party.

## TAMIL TIMES - AN APPEAL

● *Subcribers and readers of TAMIL TIMES are well aware of the problems of the Tamil speaking people of Sri Lanka, particularlyafter the recent wave of violence that swept the country like a tornado.*

● *The SATURDAY REVIEW and SUTHANTHIRAN, the papers we have heavily relied upon for information have been banned by the government. Today, there is no other paper to highlight the plight of the Tamils and speak on their behalf except for the Tamil Times.*

● *The Sri Lankan state-controlled press is biased and anti-Tamil in its coverage of news and information.*

● *In this context, the regular and, if finances permit, more frequent publication of TAMIL TIMES is of crucial importance. For this purpose, more suitable arrangements in regard to printing, news gathering, circulation and editorial work have to be made.*

*THIS MEANS ADDITIONAL MONEY WILL BE REQUIRED.*

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# TAMIL NOBEL LAUREATE – S. CHANDRASEKHAR – A HIGHLY HONOURED SCIENTIST

Professor Subramanyan Chandrasekhar, nephew of Sir C.V. Raman, another Indian Nobel Laureate in Physics, was born on October 19, 1910, at Lahore and had his early education in the Presidency College, Madras. He obtained his doctorate from Cambridge in 1933 and worked at Trinity College, Cambridge University, as a Fellow from 1933 to 1937 before he joined as a Research Associate at Chicago University. He was made a Morton D Hull Distinguished Service Professor of Astrophysics and Physics at the Institute of Nuclear Physics in the Yerkes Observatory of the University of Chicago in 1946 in recognition of his merit and contributions, especially by the renowned astronomer and colleague, Otto Sturve. His main work which the Royal Swedish Academy has just recognised and cited was actually completed in 1939.

Professor Chandrasekhar is a recipient of several awards and medals for his work in

**Prof. Chandrasekhar**

the areas of mathematics, physics, astronomy, astrophysics and cosmogeny, such as the Bruce Medal of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific in 1952, Romford Medal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1957 and Royal Medal of the Royal Society of London in 1962. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, and Royal Society and was editor of the distinguished Astrophysical Journal. He authored several valuable books such as the *An Introduction of Stellar Structure* (1939), *Principle of Stellar Dynamics* (1942), *Radiative Transfer* (1950), *Hydrodynamics and Hydromagnetic Stability* (1961), *Ellipsoidal Figures of Equilibrium* (1969) etc apart from several research publications.

Professor Chandrasekhar combines the best scientific and cultural traditions of the East and the West, while still rooted in Indian culture and ethos. He has maintained a keen interest in the affairs of the country of his birth even as he is a naturalised American citizen since 1953. His present interest is in the study of 'black holes'.

**Link, October 30, 1983**

## JAYEWARDENE'S ARYAN NOSE

The myth of Aryan-Sinhala connection assumed a new 'nosey' dimension during a recent discussion on a motion calling for the protection of Buddhist shrines, in the Sri Lankan Parliament

Mr W.J.M. Lokubandara, Minister of Indigenous Medicine, told Parliament that there appeared to be a close connection between the people of North India and the Sinhala people of Sri Lanka. They are all Aryans, he proclaimed.

To prove his point, the Minister said: 'This was evident from the fact that the people of these two regions had similar features. Mrs Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, had a nose which was similar to that of President Jayewardene. The Leader of the Opposition, Mr A. Amirthalingham, however, did not have that kind of nose.'

One MP belonging to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, who has done some research into Mr J.R. Jayewardene's ancestry, was heard to say: 'If the Minister's nosey logic was correct, then Mrs Gandhi must have an Arab ancestry, for Mr Jayewardene certainly has such ancestry.'

## THE LIBRARY

Jaffna, June 1981

'We're frightened! They're so clever!
They'll take our jobs away,
They work from early morning till midnight,
Its unfair in this climate,
To slave in such a way,
So what we've done was bad, but serve them right!

Why are all our doctors Tamils?
And not good Sinhalese?
Some dirty work has gone on, that we know,
And Tamil Tigers prosper,
Whilst the land is on its knees,
We decided tht this state of things must go.

They're living up in Jaffna,
And all have gold we hear,
A local Tamil always will come back!
But this time we'll do damage,
We'll teach them to know fear!
And Jaffna Town we'll burn and loot and sack!

Let's set fire to the market,
And ignite each poor man's shop,
Their local paper, that's the first to burn!
But what about the army?
Will no one call a stop?
They'll just look the other way, as law we spurn!

So Jaffna's now a funeral pile,
A place of smouldering ash —
The market and the little shops all gone,
To antagonise the government?
Why that was very rash!
Their library we've fired!
Their only one.

If we stop them reading,
And make sure they cannot learn,
Our boys down south will have a better chance,
They'll take all the top positions,
And more money they can earn,
So we'll lead the Tamil Devils quite a dance!

If people in the outside world,
Complain of what was done,
We'll tell them that they're 'talking through their hat'.
We'll say it was the terrorists who started all the fun!
We're sure the British fools will swallow that!

We'll say 'It's just like Belfast!
So why should you complain?
Don't poke your nose in other people's shit!
We say 'You're no better!
You also law distain,
Irishmen will tell those facts fit!'

But do they fit? Or are they lies?
Does a British army rob and loot and burn?
Are there really British police thugs,
Who truth and law despise?
We'll ask you to face the facts now in return!

Are British Papers censored?
Are they government-controlled?
And is the truth suppressed and out of reach?
You know the answer surely?
You don't need to be told,
We value here the freedom of our speech!

MORAL:
Is it a 'Taste of Paradise?'
Or maybe a glimpse of Hell—
Are people in Sri Lanka really free?
There is an Ancient proverb,
And that to you we'll tell,
There are none so blind as those who will not see.

*(The author is a European who was teaching in Sri Lanka until recently. This poem refers to the burning of Jaffna Public Library and parts of Jaffna City in May–June 1981).*

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# THONDAMAN ACCUSES CABINET COLLEAGUE

Ceylon Workers Congress President Mr S. Thondaman, Minister of Rural Development, has accused his Cabinet colleague Mr Gamini Dissanayake, Minister of Lands & Development, of failing to give shape and content to a decision of the Cabinet to regularise the land holdings of 'stateless persons and other people of Indian origin' living in the Northern province. Mr Thondaman made this accusation in a wide-ranging press interview during his recent visit to India.

Mr Thondaman said: 'The failure of the Minister of Lands & Development to give shape and content to a decision of the Cabinet to regularise the land holdings of stateless persons and other people of Indian origin in the North through a dialogue with the Minister of Rural Industrial Development and the President of the Ceylon Workers Congress has been a major contributory factor to this sad state of affairs which we are witnessing today.

'Instead of implementing the declared policy of regularising the settlements of people of Indian origins in these areas, where they were transported and dumped as refugees after the previous holocausts, a concerted attempt was made by officials to drive them out of their holdings under various false pretexts. This was further intensified around the middle of July when the police and security personnel set in motion a wave of terror, intimidating the settlers and driving them away.'

Using the state-controlled Lankan media, which always has ample provision for anti-Tamil propaganda, Mr Dissanayake in a counter-blast against Mr Thondaman and the C.W.C. has accused that 'their main concern was to pursue their political interests of expanding their domain to new frontiers . . . Mr Thondaman's C.W.C. is billeting stateless people in colonies in the Northern districts quite unconcerned with the security perspective of the country. The TULF and its terrorists are thereafter permitted to do what they like with these innocent people and, if Dr Rajasunderam is an example, even enfold them into the terrorist and Eelamist cause.'

# JAYEWARDENE MUST ACT QUICKLY

**— THE HINDU**

**The frank assertion only last week of the Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi, that a dangerous situation was developing in Sri Lanka over the fate of the Tamils, underlines the fact that nothing has been done since the day the worst kind of state terrorism was let loose on the ethnic minority some three months ago to reveal any intention to set matters right. The leaders of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) have been waiting for a reconciliatory programme to be initiated by President Jayewardene, but so far he has made no worthwhile move in this direction. Instead, his government has launched a propaganda campaign, the thrust of which was that the armed forces had only put down what (in its view) was a new wave of homicidal violence by (Tamil) terrorists. The fact that several hundreds of Tamils were brutally done to death by army men following which some thousands of them had to flee the country for safety, has been suppressed. A contrived attempt to oversimplify the problem has been made by assertion that strenuous efforts were set in motion since 1977 to redress the real grievances of the Tamil community. A great deal has also been said about the district development, councils and a decentralised budgetary system, though neither of them has made any visible difference to the status of the Tamils. The development programmes which the Government has claimed were specially designed for north and east Sri Lanka, have not take the shape they were designed to. Nor has the constitutional provision recognising Tamil as a national language placed the minorities on a footing of equality with the Sinhala majority. Whether it is entry into**

**the services or admission to the universities, the Tamils have been discriminated against, while on paper it was made to look as though issues that had grown acute through neglect were resolved.**

**President Jayewardene appears to be playing for time; he might also be taking a very risky path. He is unwilling to permit a resumption of the diplomatic efforts to find a solution to the intricate problems initiated by the Indian Government when Mr G. Parthasarathy visited the Island as special envoy of the Prime Minister. Reports have it that Mr Jayewardene would prefer first to have discussions with Mrs Gandhi during his forthcoming visit to New Delhi to attend the Conference of Heads of Commonwealth Governments. It is a matter of speculation whether he will at all visit India. He is, in the meanwhile, supposed to confer with some Opposition parties in Sri Lanka on the Tamil minority issue, although it is clear that any decision taken at such a conference wil be infructuous if the TULF is not a participant. This has been commented upon by no less a leader than Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike when she declared that the Jayewardene Government's conduct on negotiations with the Tamils, 'has not inspired confidence among the Sinhalese or the Tamils'. There is really no way of arriving at an enduring solution without involving the TULF in the rightful manner. Although the Tamil leaders have been insisting that they stand for a separate State — Eelam — Mr A. Amirthalingam has publicly observed that it was up to Mr Jayewardene to offer a viable alternative. And it is here that they should continue to seek the help of the Indian Government. Mrs Gandhi has assurd Sri Lanka that India has no intention at all of interfering in its internal affairs but 'it cannot also remain unconcerned about the plight of the Tamil people there'. This sums up the position correctly. The meaning is clear, and Mr Jayewardene needs to act quickly to make significant moves to assuage the feelings of those persecuted and bring to an end the discriminatory policies and provocative measures that have been the root cause of unprecedented violence.**

**(By kind courtesy of 'THE HINDU', Editorial, 29.10.83)**

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# 'TAMIL ISSUE – INDIA'S CONCERN TO BE EXPECTED'

## — Mrs Bandaranaike

Former Premier Mrs Bandaranaike, underlining again 'the limited, if useful' role that India can play in the Sri Lankan ethnic crisis, has said that the Jayewardene Government's conduct on negotiations with the Tamils 'has not inspired confidence among the Sinhalese or the Tamils'.

'If you are interested in negotiations, you cannot ask one party to come to the table after giving up its main demand . . . it's not the way to open talks, if you are serious,' the Opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party leader said.

Mrs Bandaranaike's statement in a press interview, candidly underlined the basic difference with the President, Mr Jayewardene's United National Party, the other major Sinhala party, on the key question, 'Should the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) give up separatism before the negotations'.

When there was no one here to break the deadlock in the rival approaches to the Government and TULF, 'then it is useful to secure the good offices of Mrs Gandhi to break the deadlock'. 'That is the role Mrs Gandhi can plan, and I think that is what she is trying to play.'

The former Premier said, though, 'it is our problem, basically a problem for Sri Lanka. Nevertheless, one cannot expect India not to be concerned.'

First, there were Indian citizens here. Then, there was the strong feeling in Tamil Nadu. 'We must realise that Mrs Gandhi is very concerned about that . . . naturally, we are all politicians and we must accept political facts.'

Endorsing 'the understandable stand' that the Tamil party must finally recounce separatism, but it need not be before the negotiations, Mrs Bandaranaike stressed that the Tamils had voted for a separate state.

If the TULF leader, Mr A. Amirthalingam, were to turn back on that mandate, he must get approval of at least his party at a conference. But 'what are they to tell the conference,' Mrs Bandaranaike asked.

'If they get some concrete offers, some practical alternative proposals, then they can tell their people: 'Let's consider this, let's discuss, this is what is offered. We are going to have a conference with all the major parties and let us at least negotiate. The TULF can try to persuade their people.'

# 'INDIA WILL NOT TAKE REFUGEES FROM SRI LANKA'

The Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi, has made it quite clear to all concerned that India cannot and will not take millions of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka in the wake of the ethnic violence there.

At her press conference on October 13, she said a dangerous situation was developing in Sri Lanka over the fate of the Tamil minority and India was deeply concerned about it. She sincerely hoped that the Sri Lankan President, Mr J.R. Jayewardene, and his party would take a fresh look at this problem and try to resolve it without adopting an extreme position.

The Prime Minister assured Sri Lanka once again that India had no intention at all of interfering in its internal affairs, but it could not also remain unconcerned about the plight of the Tamil people there. The bulk of the Sri Lanka Tamils have been inhabiting the island as long as the Sinhalese, if not longer, implying that they could not be treated as aliens who were not entitled to equal rights.

Asked about special envoy Mr G. Parthasarathy's next visit, Mrs Gandhi said that it was postponed earlier at the suggestion of Mr Jayewardene, who wanted more time to consult other parties in Sri Lanka before talking to him. But no new dates had been set for the visit as the Government of India was still awaiting word from the Sri Lankan President about it.

Meanwhile, the Tamil problem had assumed a more serious dimension in view of the impending loss of seats of the Tamil United Liberation Front members of the Sri Lanka Parliament. The Prime Minister made a reference to it, presumably to draw attention to the consequences of depriving the Tamil community of its representation in Parliament in the wake of the recent constitutional amendment requiring all members to take an oath of loyalty to the concept of a unitary state.

She stressed the need for direct contact between the Sri Lankan Government and the leaders of the Tamil community to negotiate a reasonable political settlement acceptable to both sides. The implication of this observation was that India could offer its good offices in bringing about a settlement if the two sides were ready to negotiate a lasting solution to the ethnic problem. But it could not on its own evolve such a settlement without the co-operation of both sides.

The Prime Minister spoke of the sad situation in Sri Lanka with considerable restraint in reply to several questions on the subject because she did not want to say anything harsh about the dilatory tactics of the Jayewardene Government, which was apparently bent on dragging its feet to gain time to avoid any serious negotiations except on its own terms. The Indian fears about Sri Lankan intentions became clear from the reports that Mr Jayewardene had called a a conference of all Sinhalese parties, including the Communist Party, on which the recently imposed ban had been specially lifted to enable its participation, to a discussion on the Tamil problem from which, strangely enough, the TULF is being deliberately kept out.

It is against this general background that India has been voicing its fears about the dangers of a fresh outbreak of ethnic violence in Sri Lanka which could create a grave situation. The question that many diplomatic observers in Delhi keep on asking is how long would India be able to avoid getting embroiled in such a tragic development if, in the wake of fresh riots in the island, it is faced with an exodus of panic-stricken Tamils fleeing for their lives.

## USA condemned for its aid to Colombo & Trinco base

# TN ASSEMBLY'S FULL SUPPORT FOR TAMIL STRUGGLE

An official resolution adopted by the Tamil Nadu State Assembly on October 25 'conveyed the full support of the House for the struggle of the Sri Lanka Tamils to secure their rights'. The resolution hoped that the struggle would be crowned with success.

The resolution, in its operative part, requested Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to expedite her efforts to arrange for a dialogue between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil leaders in order to find a permanent political solution to the ethnic problem.

The resolution conveyed its grateful thanks to the efforts made by Chief Minister MGR and the Prime Minister in bringing redress to the sufferings of Sri Lanka Tamils.

The resolution:

- Called upon the US Government not to supply arms or other materials to Sri Lanka Government, taking into account the fact that the Jayewardene Government and its army and the police had aided and abetted the crimes against Sri Lanka Tamils during the July riots. The resolution further seeks to condemn the US for its proposed aid to Sri Lanka, ignoring its own human rights plank and its obligation to help the

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# TN ASSEMBLY

FROM PAGE 17

Tamil victims of ethnic riots in the island.

- Called upon the US to give up its plan for setting up a naval basee in Trincomalee.
- Sought to describe the 6th amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution as barbarous and uncalled for and demanded its immediate withdrawal.
- Further demanded of the Sri Lankan Government to arrange for a round table conference of all, including Tamil representatives without any precondition in order to find a solution which will ensure total and complete security for Tamils and their rights.
- Thanked the Indian Government for including the State Electricity Minister S. Ramachandran in the Indian delegation to the 38th session of the UN Assembly.
- Congratulated S. Ramachandran for placing on the records of the world the feelings and aspirations of 5 crore Tamil people over the ethnic killings in Sri Lanka.
- Further conveyed the full support of the House for the struggle of the Sri Lankan Tamils to secure their rights. The resolution hoped that the struggle would be crowned with success.
- Further requested the Tamil Nadu Government to take all steps through the Government of India to secure the implementation of the suggestions contained in the resolution.
- Also congratulated the public organisations and various political parties for their solidarity action, expressed through processions, demonstrations, strikes and hartals, all these within the bounds of the law.
- Placed on record and endorsed the steps taken by the Chief Minister MGR to reflect the emotional upsurge of the people over the uncivilised and barbarous ethnic killings. It thanked Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for taking steps to stop the ethnic violence and for her good offices in the matter.

# SHOBANA ARANGETAM

Shobana, daughter of Mr & Mrs P. Sathananthan of Mitcham, Surrey; pupil of Ratika Perinpanayagam held her Bharatha Natya arrangetam on October 1, at Wallington Public Hall, London. An appreciative audience filled the hall to capacity.

Though brought up in the western milieu, Shobana has obviously grasped well all the most demanding and intricate aspects of Bharatha Natyam. The peformance included an expertly performed Siva Thandavam in addition to traditional components of a Bharatha Natya sequence. She displayed grace and stamina inspired by dedication. The success of the arangetam of the 14 year old Shobana will undoubtedly motivate her to aim for excellence in the art.

# MINISTER NAILS MONK'S FALSEHOODS

FROM PAGE 5

Chelvanayakam Pact with various conditions, of which one was the right to obtain land for Indians. The other was that I was to withdraw the cases against those officers, and those who could not be settled were to go back to the places from where they came. The cases were accordingly discharged on both sides.

### Terms fulfilled

'Unlike the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact, the terms of this pact were fulfilled. I have in the course of a debate referred to it and produced it in Parliament and is part of the Hansard. I still have the original with me. So you will see that what there was about these encroachments. They were taken note of and regularised by the last Government.

'The settlers are scattered in various places at different times, because they came whenever there was a disturbance and were driven away, unlike the peaceful deliberate encroachment for pastures new. In 1977 when the Hon. Gamini Dissanayake came to my electorate he spoke to some of these Indian settlers who had come from Muwara Eliya district and he knew them. They gave him a reception and he promised to help them. Some of them were sent from the Hambantota district and from Kataragama to be settled here.

'What a tragedy — foxes have holes and the birds in the air have nests to rest in, but man has no place in this country to rest his head because he is of Indian origin.

'It is time we revised our sense of values. I am interested in trying to put the record straight!!'

# THE PLIGHT OF INNOCENT TAMILS

There lie in the Northern houses
Those empty clothes, the melancholy strain,
The haunting rapes, the boundless pain,
The ravaged hearts, the bloody stains,
The breath of the innocent Tamils . . .

There lie in the prison walls
Those restless souls, the relics of slaughter,
Those mutilated bodies of defenceless martyrs
Clothed in agony, soaked in crimson,
The eyes of the innocent Tamils . . .

There lie the shattered dwellings,
The hard earned toil after years of labour,
The burning roofs, the staring ruins,
The looting mobs, the murdering thugs
They laugh at the innocent Tamils . . .

There lie in the highland valleys
The estate slums, the dull green tea,
The blood of exploited labour
Their homes in ashes, their lives in peril,
The fate of the innocent Tamils . .

The night will pass and the day will come
When good will triumph o'er evil,
Terror and torture will vanish for ever,
Peace and calm will reign supreme

**S. Wimaleswaran, Nigeria**

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# TULF MPs LOSE SEATS

## *ANURA REPLACES AMIR AS OPPOSITION LEADER*

All sixteen members of the Sri Lankan Parliament belonging to the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) have lost their seats after boycotting sessions for three months. The MPs have all refused to swear an oath renouncing their call for a separate Tamil state.

The TULF has boycotted Parliament ever since the ethnic violence in July in which hundreds of Tamils were killed and their properties destroyed. In August, the government brought in the Sixth Constitutional Amendment requiring MPs to swear allegiance to a unitary state.

Under the 1978 Constitution, the TULF could in theory nominate its own successors to the seats which have now fallen vacant because of the three-month absence rule. But the TULF never had any intention of doing this, hoping to force by-elections to the seats in order to get some publicity for themselves by winning the seats again. This hope was dashed, however, when at the beginning of this month the Government decided to amend the election laws to compel all candidates at by-elections to take the anti-separatist oath.

This has placed the TULF in a very difficult position. The leadership of the party is still unwilling to renounce separatism, unless substantial concesions are offered.

Meanwhile, the Government of President Jayewardene remains adamant that there can be no negotiations with the TULF until they abandon their separatist call. One possible way out of this apparent deadlock might be for the TULF to field sympathisers as independent candidates and allow them to take the loyalty oath. The TULF might also decide to contest the by-elections under their old name, the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi or Lanka Federal Party, which pre-dated the separatist call.

The TULF General Secretary, Mr A. Amirthalingam, who became leader of the Opposition in Parliament in July 1977 has been replaced by the 34-year-old Mr Anura Bandaranaike of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

# THONDAMAN CALLS FOR SPECIAL STATUS FOR TAMIL AREAS

Mr S. Thondaman, Rural Development Minister in the Jayewardene Cabinet, welcomed the idea of conferring 'special status' in the Sri Lanka constitution to the predominantly Tamil areas, on the lines of the special provision of the Indian constitution regarding the State of Jammu and Kashmir in India. This was one of the proposals submitted by him towards a lasting solution to the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka, said Mr Thondaman, in the course of a press interview at New Delhi.

Mr Thondaman also said that he was continuing to be a member of the Sri Lankan Government so as to ensure the welfare and to remedy the problems facing the Tamil people of recent Indian origin in Sri Lanka.

Mr Thondaman admitted that the present Government had failed to implement certain undertakings that had been agreed on. He said that he had recommended to President Jayewardene that para-military units consisting of members from all communities should be set up on a regional basis. These units would be equipped to face any emergency such as an outbreak of communal violence.

# EUROPEAN-SRI LANKA SOLIDARITY GROUPS CONFERENCE

# RESOLUTIONS

European-Sri Lankan Solidarity Groups from several countries of Europe met in Brussels for three days — November 4 to 6 — and discussed the current situation in Sri Lanka. Human rights violations, the violence against the Tamil people, the denial of citizenship and voting rights to Tamil plantation workers, and suppression of democratic and trade union rights in Sri Lanka were some of the subjects which were considered in detail by the conference.

The Conference adopted the following resolutions:

● The Sri Lankan regime, by its actions during the last few years, has revealed all the characteristics of a racist dictatorship. The use of political thuggery and state terrorism has become a permanent feature in the Lankan political scene.

### National sel-determination

● We note that the Tamil people of Sri Lanka are being subjected to violence repeatedly and more frequently since the assumption to power of the present government and are denied their fundamental rights. We recognise and support their right to national self-determination.

● We recognise that the Sinhalese people are being subjected to and misled by mischievous and distorted anti-Tamil racist propaganda and consider that the forces behind this campaign should be exposed.

● We note that the people of Sri Lanka as a whole are subjected to gross violations of human and democratic rights. Trade union rights are being denied to workers and their organisations. The Prevention of Terrorism Act contains provisions which violate internationally accepted United Nations Convenants.

### Denial of basic rights

● The Tamil plantation workers have been deprived of basic rights of citizenship and franchise and are compelled to live in semi-slave conditions. We demand that their right to citizenship and franchise be immediately restored.

● We note that there are serious allegations that foreiggn aid granted to the Sri Lanka government is being used in a racially and politically discriminatory manner, and request that the donor countries make it conditional before grant of aid, that such discrimination is removed.

● We are of the opinion that any foreign military intervention in the present circumstances would not facilitate the resolution of the problems facing the people of Sri Lanka and condemn such intervention. We demand that all military aid and training programmes provided by all foreign governments to Sri Lanka be terminated forthwith.

# HOMAGE PAID TO TAMILS KILLED

# TN ASSEMBLY CONVEYS CONCERN & ANGUISH

The Tamil Nadu Assembly adopted a resolution on October 24 paying homage to the Tamils killed in the recent racial violence in Sri Lanka.

The resolution was moved from the Chair by the Speaker, Mr K. Rajaram. The resolution sought to convey the Assembly's 'deep concern and anguish' at the ethnic violence in Sri Lanka where 'Sri Lanka Tamils, Tamils of Indian origin and Tamils who are Indian nationals have constantly been subjected to severe hardship for the past 30 years'.

'These Tamils have been denied their right to live, they have been massacred, they have been tortured in prisons, the modesty of their women has been outraged and their properties have been looted, set fire and destroyed,' the resolution said.

The resolution noted that since July last 'inhuman atrocities, rape, setting on fire properties and terrorism' had been let loose by Sinhala fanatics and the Sri Lanka army and the police.

The House, through the resolution, paid its homage to those who had lost their lives during these ethnic disturbances and expressed its deep-felt sympathy and conveyed the condolences to the bereaved familes.

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# ABOUT PEOPLE

K.A. Selliah, JP
Born: 27 October 1904
Died: 5 October 1983

The death of Mr K. A. SELLIAH, B.Sc.Lond., Dip in Ed Lond., FPS (Lond), PRINCIPAL EMERITUS of JAFFNA COLLEGE, VADDUKODDAI has left a great void in the community of Jaffna, where he had served with utmost devotion till the end. Mr Selliah had a very initimate connection with the college from 1917 until the time of his death — a period of sixty-five years as student, teacher, vice-Principal, Principal, Welfare Officer, and member of the 'Board of Directors'.

He succeeded the Rev. Dr. S.K. Bunker as the first national Principal in 1947 and served with equal excellence until his retirement in 1968. He advocated hard work and simple living and had the unwavering faith in the democratic system of management. He also believed in freedom of speech and the liberty of expressing one's opinion as the very essence of democracy. During times of difficulty in the College, as a member of the Board of Directors, Mr Selliah worked indefatigably and responsibly and helped to overcome every crisis with remarkable fortitude.

The life and work of this great man cannot be concluded without it being written in the annals of the history of our community and country. His ideals and achievements and his dedicated life of devoted service will never be forgotten, but continue to be upheld in the portals of his much loved Alma Mater.

He has fought the good fight and finished his course with unswerving faith and dignity.

Besides many grieving relatives, friends and alumni, the family mourners are his children, MRS KAMALA ALPHONSUS (COLOMBO),DR & MRS RAJAN SELLIAH (BATTICALOA), PROFESSOR & MRS BALAN SELLIAH (JAFFNA UNIVERSITY), MISS SELVI SELLIAH (PRINCIPAL — UDUVIL GIRLS COLLEGE), MR CECIL & DR JAYA EDWARDS (CANADA), MR & MRS SATHI SELLIAH (CANADA), and MR & MRS JEEVARATNAM (PUTTUR).

**R.W.K.**

## MRS MABEL VIJAYARATNAM

Mrs Mable Vijayaratnam, nee Hudson Thambirajah, passed away peacefully at the May Day Hospital, Croydon, on 12 October 1983. Her husband Mr C. Vijayaratham predeceased her a few years ago. She was a talented teacher for many years in Sri Lanka and was highly respected by all who knew her for her many virtues — the most outstanding of them all was her 'Great Humility'.

She leaves behind her only son Vijayarajan, brother and sister-in-law Mr and Mrs D.T. Wijayanathan, and a host of relations and friends to bemoan her loss.

**R.W.K.**

**MEMORIAL SERVICE for MR K.A. SELLIAH — retired Principal, Jaffna College, Vadduroddai.**
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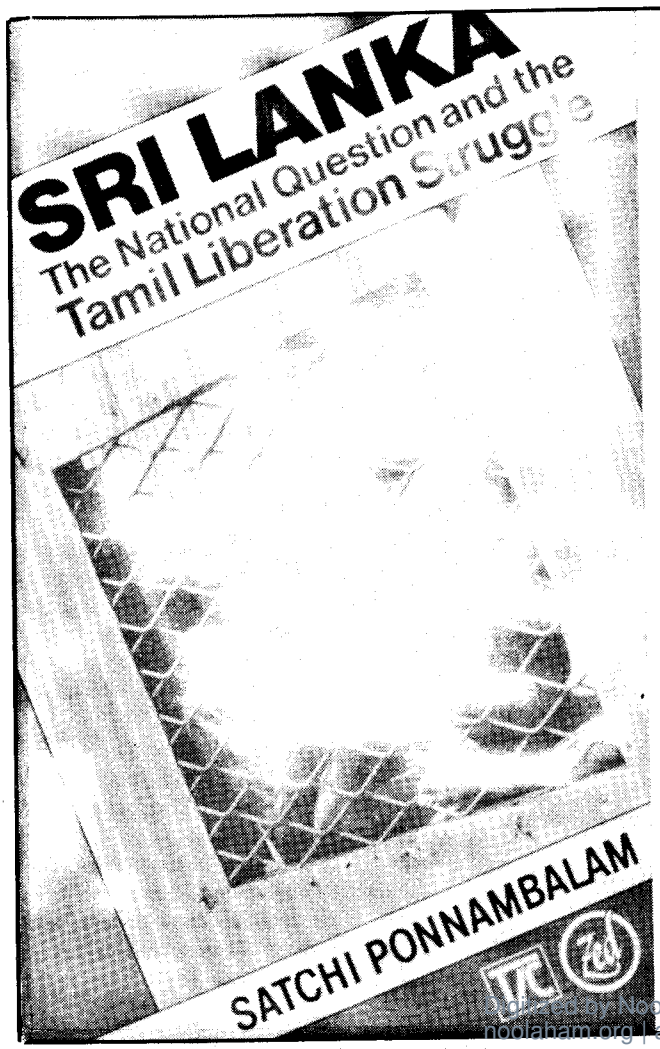
**At 5.30p.m. on Saturday 26 November 1983**


**SRI LANKA** The National Question and the Tamil Liberation Struggle **Price £5.50 plus postage**

**Sri Lanka: The National Question and the Tamil Liberation Struggle** is the first book by a Sri Lankan on a conflict that has now escalated into wide-ranging violence and become the dominant issue facing the country. Its author, Saatchi Ponnambalam, has written a scholarly but committed history of relations between the island's two distinct nations — Sinhalese and Tamils — which goes back over 2,000 years. He concentrates on the post-independence period, and provides a detailed record of the discriminatory measures successive governments have taken against the Tamil population. This hostility on the part of a section of the Sinhalese has risen, he argues, not because of any inevitable antagonism. Rather, its roots lie in the determination of the Sinhalese ruling class to divert the struggle common to both the Sinhalese and Tamil oppressed classes, a struggle inherent in the nature of Sri Lanka's neo-colonial, capitalist economy (an economy which benefits only the ruling class itself). These upper-class Sinhalese politicians, the author argues, are manipulating a myth of Sinhalese Ayran supremacy — at the cost of abandoning true Buddhism — so as to keep power in their own hands.

Ponnambalam outlines the Tamili people's struggle over the past quarter of a century for equality, justice and dignity. With the failure of these demands, Tamil organisations are now fighting for national freedom from internal colonialism and oppression, and demanding a separate state of Tamil Eelam in the northern and eastern parts of the island. To contain this separatist ground-swell, the Government has subjected the Tamils to a state of emergency since 1979, unleashed the armed forces, imposed press censorship, and used its Prevention of Terrorism Act almost indiscriminately against its opponents.

**Saatchi Ponnambalam** is a Sri Lankan lawyer who was educated at the Universities of Cairo and London. Now a judge, he is the author of *Dependent capitalism in Crisis: The Sri Lankan Economy, 1948-80.*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# LEAFLET WAR AGAINST TAMILS AND MUSLIMS

Leaflets holding out threats to Tamil and Muslim minorities in Colombo are being freely distributed. Although the Sri Lanka Cabinet had recently denounced the distribution of such pamphlets the vicious leaflet warfare continues.

The leaflets in Sinhalese, issued in the name of the Sinhala Maha Sabha, carry a vicious attack on Tamils and Muslims. They have been mailed to prominent professionals, officials and traders belonging to these communities.

The leaflets inter alia state while Tamils had their own Tamil Nadu and Muslims 40 countries of the world, the Sinhalese Buddhists had only one land — Sri Lanka. They alleged that Tamils and Muslims controlled 90 per cent of trade and business in the island. The gem trade was entirely in the hands of Muslims and money-lending was controlled by Indian Tamils.

The leaflet also states that Tamils and Muslims with their tilting votes were actually wielding the power and this should not be allowed for long.

Meanwhile, the Sinhalese language press had stepped up a campaign against Tamils and Muslims and tried to justify the violence unleashed against the Tamil minority in the island in July-August.

# TAMIL EELAM ON THE AIR

MADRAS — a radio station, styling itself as Voice of Tamil Eelam, was on the air on November 4th.

The maiden broadcast, heard by several people in the city on 41 metres, opened with a song 'Vazhga Tamil Eelam', described as the Tamil Eelam national anthem.

Inquiries with Sri Lankan Tamil sources here indicated that the clandestine radio station has been set up by a militant youth organisation called Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT), with equipment bought from West Germany.

PLOT is led by Mr K. Mukundan, alias Uma Maheswaran.

The location of the radio station could not be ascertained, but the sources said it was not operating from Indian territory.

Voice of Tamil Eelam will broadcast on 7000 kHz on the 41m band.
Times of broadcast:
Saturday: 7 to 9p.m.
Sunday: 7 to 9p.m.
Wednesday: 7.30 to 8p.m.

# PARTHASARATHY'S MISSION TO COLOMBO

It is reported that the recent talks between Mrs Indira Gandhi's Special Envoy, Mr G. Parthasarathy, and the Sri Lankan President were concluded on November 10 with the former carrying with him certain proposals aimed at breaking the deadlock between the Lanka government and the Tamil United Liberation Front.

It is learnt that the proposals include the giving up by the TULF of their call for a separate state in return for the Jayewardene government agreeing to regional councils for each of the nine provinces of the island. The regional councils would have wide powers and functions as yet undefined and would operate within the framework of a unitary state. They would be created through appropriate amendments to the existing District Development Councils Act and would. come into being through the merger of DDCs within each province. But this would be subject to acceptance by the members of each council and would also have to be approved at a referendum in each district. The administration of Trincomalee Port, which is in the East Province where the Tamils are 38 per cent of the population, would be outside the jurisdiction of the new regional councils. It would continue to remain, as at present, under central government control

### Proposals unacceptable

From the standpoint of the Tamils, the proposals would hardly seem acceptable. On the other hand, the Sinhala chauvinist hardliners would attempt to thwart any negotiated settlement.

Mr Jayewardene, having initially accepted the offer of the 'good offices' by the Indian Government, kept dragging his feet during the last two and a half months while the Ministers went about the country whipping up anti-Indian hysteria. Some Ministers accused the Indian government of interfering in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka and suggested that India should mind its own business. Even the President was reported as having said that India had no more role to play. Not only did he request Mr Parthasarathy postpone his trip to Colombo, Mr Jayewardene also cancelled his journey to the United Nations last month, thus avoiding a personal summit meeting with Mrs Indira Gandhi there.

### Mrs Gandhi's stern message

Clearly, the Indian Government and Mrs Gandhi in particular were angered by the Lankan Government's dilatory tactics and a direct consequence of this was that the Indian UN representative raised the question of the involuntary flow of Tamil refugees into India from Sri Lanka at the recent special meeting of the UN Refugee Commission.

The invitation to Mr Parthasarathy from Mr Jayewardene to visit Colombo followed a meeting between the President and Mr Thondaman on his return from India. Presumably, the latter carried a sufficiently stern message from Mrs Gandhi.

### A ploy

Political observers feel that the invitation to Mr Parthasarathy and his subsequent talks with the President was a ploy on the part of the latter to clear the way and avoid any embarrassing confrontation with Mrs Gandhi at New Delhi where the Commonwealth Heads of Government are scheduled to meet later this month. Once the Commonwealth Conference is out of the way, the Sri Lankan government is likely to behave no differently from what they have done in the past and avoid any serious committment to a negotiated settlement acceptable to the Tamils.

In any event the reported proposals submitted to Mr Parthasarathy in no way meet the just aspirations of the Tamil people. Only proposals based on a constitutionally guaranteed special autonomous status for the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka under which the Tamil people are granted the power to determine their destiny without having to face Sinhala oppression and violence, will make the Tamil people consider any negotiations worthwhile.

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